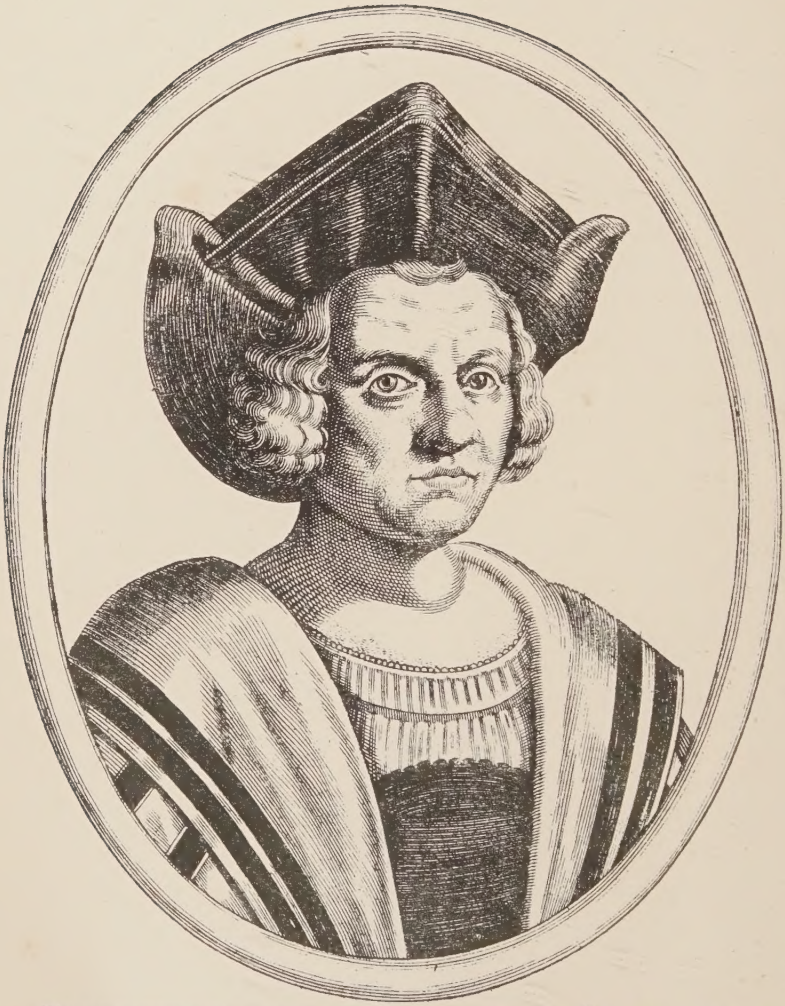
CUBA

PAST AND PRESENT

CUBA PAST AND PRESENT



CHRISTOPHORUS COLUMBUS LIGURINDI-
ARUM PRIMUS INVENTOR ANNO 1492

Qui rate velivola occiduos penetravit ad indos.
Primus et Americam Nobilitavit humum.
Astrorum consultus et ipso Nobilis ausu.
Christophorus tali fronte Columbus erat.

CUBA

PAST AND PRESENT

BY

RICHARD DAVEY

AUTHOR OF "THE SULTAN AND HIS SUBJECTS"

With Illustrations and Map.

NEW YORK:
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1898

T. E. U. LIBRARY

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/cubapastpresent0000rich

PREFACE.

Any contribution to Cuban literature cannot, if so I may call it, but possess considerable interest at this absorbing moment. The following pages embody the experience gathered during a visit to Cuba some years ago, and to this I have added many facts and memoranda bestowed by friends whose knowledge of the country is more recent than my own, and information collected from various works upon Cuba and West Indian subjects. I do not pretend that the book is an authoritative text-book on Cuban matters—I give it as the result of personal observation, so far as it goes, supplemented in the manner already indicated ; and as such I believe it will not be found lacking in elements of interest and entertainment. Certain chapters on Columbus and on the West Indian Manuscripts in the Colonial Exhibition have been included as an Appendix.

The description of the youth of Columbus, the "Great Discoverer," has never, so far as I am aware, been attempted before in the English tongue. It appeared to me to be appropriate to a work on the island he was the first to discover, and I have

therefore included it in this book. It is founded on original and authentic documents, discovered in the Genoese Archives by the late Marchese Staglieno. These I have carefully examined and verified, and to the facts therein contained I have added others, which I have myself unearthed in the course of my own researches in the Città Superba.

The chapter on the Colonial Exhibition Manuscripts speaks for itself, and my readers will be struck by the fact that the condition of the British West Indian Colonies, at the close of the last century, resembled in many respects not a little that of Cuba at the end of ours.

The chapter on the Bahamas, which closes the volume, has been inserted to mark an evident contrast, and point a moral, which will hardly escape the thoughtful reader's eye.

I cannot forbear paying here a tribute to the memory of the very remarkable American gentleman, the late Mr George Wilkes, in whose company I first saw the beautiful "Pearl of the Antilles." On the important paper which he founded, the New York *Spirit of the Times*, I worked for several very happy years, and I take this opportunity of expressing to its present editor and to Mr Stephen Fiske, my gratitude for much and constant courtesy, shown me ever since I left its staff.

RICHARD DAVEY.

CONTENTS.

		PAGE
PREFACE		v
CHAPTER I.	THE ISLAND	1
„ II.	POPULATION	14
„ III.	A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ISLAND	39
„ IV.	THE BEGINNINGS OF THE REBELLION	65
„ V.	HISTORY OF REBELLION UP-TO-DATE	93
„ VI.	HAVANA AND THE HAVANESE	121
„ VII.	MATANZAS	148
„ VIII.	CIENFUEGOS	161
„ IX.	TRINIDAD AND SANTIAGO DE CUBA	173
„ X.	SOME WEIRD STORIES	193
„ XI.	PLANTATION LIFE	205
„ XII.	AN ISLE OF JUNE—A CONTRAST	224
APPENDIX I.	THE BOYHOOD OF COLUMBUS	237
„ II.	SOME UNEDITED DOCUMENTS CONNECTED WITH THE HISTORY OF THE WEST INDIES	257

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PORTRAIT OF COLUMBUS	*Frontispiece.*
HAVANA	*to face* 121
MATANZAS	„ 148
SANTIAGO	„ 173
MAP OF CUBA	*at end of Book.*

CUBA PAST AND PRESENT.

CHAPTER I.

The Island.

Cuba, "the Pearl of the Antilles" and the key to the Gulf of Mexico, is not only the largest, but the most important and the wealthiest island in the West Indian Archipelago. Its curious shape has been aptly compared to that of a bird's tongue, — a parrot's by preference. From Point Maisi, at one extremity, to Cape San Antonio, at the other, it describes a curve of 900 miles, being, at its greatest breadth, only 120 miles from sea to sea. It is traversed throughout its Eastern province by a range of mountains, which, according to Humboldt, continue under the Ocean, and emerge thence in British Honduras, to receive the somewhat unromantic appellation of the Coxcombe Chain, — another proof, if such were needed, of the fact that, in prehistoric times, this island, together with its numerous neighbours, formed part of the main Continent.

The coast of Cuba, on either side beyond the

range of the Sierra Maestra, is singularly indented and irregular; and by reason of its innumerable tiny bays, capes, peninsulas, shallows, reefs, "cays," promontories, and islets, presents, on the map, the appearance of a deep curtain fringe. The surface measurement of the island is fully 35,000 square miles. In other words, it is a little bigger than Portugal, or somewhat over a fourth the size of Spain.[1]

The Sierra Maestra range rises from the coast, out of the Ocean, with grand abruptness, immediately opposite the sister island of Jamaica. It here presents much the same stately and varied panorama as may be admired on the Genoese Riviera, and, by a series of irregular terraces, reaches the Ojo del Toro, or the "Sources of the Bull," where it suddenly drops towards the centre of the chain, whence it sends

[1] The island of Cuba lies between the Caribbean Sea on the S., and the Gulf of Mexico, the Gulf of Florida, and Bahama Channel on the N., being nearly equidistant from the peninsulas of Yucatan and Florida and the islands of Hayti and Jamaica. It stretches in N. lat. from 19° 50′ to 23° 9′, and in W. long. from 74° 8′ to 84° 158′. The rainfall at Havana is said to be 92·68 inches, or more than double that of the opposite coast of Florida. The atmospheric tendencies are less violent than in the other islands. Hurricanes are frequent, but not so terrible as elsewhere in the same zone. However, one of them, in October 1846, destroyed a third of Havana, while hundreds were killed and thousands injured. The north wind blows with more or less strength throughout the entire winter months. In summer, when the sun is at its zenith, torrential rains, lasting for days at a time, are frequent. Hail is rare, but, once or twice in this century, snow has fallen on the upper plateaus of the Sierra Maestra. According to the proverbial "oldest inhabitant," the rainfall has considerably diminished of late years through the burning down of some of the forests in the central district of the island. It has also been observed that in the past twenty-five years the rainy season begins much later than it did in the good old times—in June instead of April; and ends earlier—in July instead of in October.

up one exceedingly lofty peak, the Pico Turquino, rising 6900 feet above the sea. From this point the range diminishes in height again, until it reaches the valley of the Cauto River, whence it runs in a straight line to Santiago de Cuba, after which it rapidly declines in height, and loses itself in the unwholesome Guananamo Marshes. A section of this range is popularly known, on account of its mineral wealth, as the Sierra de Cobre, or Copper Chain. Its principal peak, La Gran Piedra, so called from a huge block of conglomerate perched upon its extreme summit, is about 5200 feet high. None of the numerous peaks and crags of the Sierra Maestra and the Cobre Ranges show the least trace of recent volcanic eruption, although limestone is found high up among the mountains, and alarming earthquakes are of frequent occurrence, notably in the province of Santiago. At the eastern extremity of the island are a number of isolated mountains, linked together by low-lying hills. Two other ranges of hills exist, in the neighbourhood of Matanzas, and at the back of Havana, but although they present an imposing appearance from the seaboard, at no single point do they exceed a height of 1000 feet. The mountain ranges occupy about one-third of the island; the other two-thirds are more or less spreading and fairly well cultivated plains and level valleys, but even these fertile regions are broken by lagoons and marshes, like those in the Campagna.

Until quite late in the last century, coffee and tobacco were the principal objects of the planter's care and industry, but in 1786 the French refugees from

San Domingo persuaded the Cubans to extend their sugar plantations, and sugar very soon became the staple cultivation of the country. Next to sugar, tobacco and coffee are the chief products, but cotton is also grown, but not very extensively. Cocoa and indigo have received considerable attention lately, and maize has always been one of the absolute necessaries of life, and may be described as the bread of the country; cereals have no place in its husbandry, and are imported, for the most part, unfortunately, from Spain, which country holds a monopoly, which has had its share in bringing about the unhappy civil war of the last three years. As the negroes and the poor whites have rarely, if ever, tasted wheat flour, its absence is not felt by them, but it is an absolute necessity to the upper classes and to the foreigners. Yams, bananas, guavas, oranges, mangoes, and pineapples, are the chief fruits cultivated for exportation. The decline in the popularity of mahogany as a furniture wood in America and Europe —a mere freak of fashion—has been greatly felt. It used to be a most valuable product, and was exported in great quantities, especially to England,—the Cuban variety being considered the finest.

The mountain regions of Cuba are extremely picturesque, but very sparsely populated, and, for the most part, little known. Their slopes are often covered by forests or jungles, whose rich vegetation, constantly moistened by innumerable springs, rivulets, and heavy dews, is rankly luxuriant. Immense mineral wealth is supposed to be hidden in the heart of these mountains, but, though the copper mines are fairly well worked,

neither gold nor silver have yet been discovered in any quantity, notwithstanding the ancient and persistent tradition as to their abundance.

The entire coast of Cuba is protected, in a measure, by coralline and rocky reefs, "cays," and muddy shallows, which stretch out into the sea for miles. These are most dangerous, and have often, in stormy weather, proved fatal to large vessels, as well as to small fishing craft. Some of these banks are really fair-sized islands, covered with beautiful vegetation, but, as a rule, they are only inhabited by fishermen, and that merely at certain seasons of the year. In many localities the sea is very deep quite close in-shore, and offers excellent harbours and refuges for vessels plying on the busiest sea-road in the Western Hemisphere. The most important of the numerous outlying islands is La Isla dos Pinos, a famous health resort, where, for some unaccountable reason, the pine-tree of our northern regions flourishes to perfection amid tropical surroundings.

Every part of Cuba is supplied with fresh water. There are several fairly broad, though shallow rivers. The Cauto, which takes its rise in the Sierra Maestra, and flows into the sea at the mouth of Manzanillo Bay, is about 130 miles in length, and navigable for small craft. The only other rivers of any importance are the Sagua Grande and the Sagua Chica. Neither of these is navigable, even for small craft, except for a week or so at the close of the rainy season. Springs and streams of exquisitely pure water are to be found in incredible abundance. Indeed, the island has been

described as consisting of a series of vast caverns rising over huge reservoirs of fresh water, and the number of caves and grottoes to be found circling over pools of limpid water is really remarkable. In the mountains there are lovely waterfalls, amongst which the cascades of the Rosario are the most celebrated. A number of fair-sized lakes add considerably to the beauty of the scenery in the interior of the island, and, what is more, they are well stocked with a variety of fish of delicious flavour.

Cuba is phenomenally free from noxious animals and reptiles. Columbus only found two quadrupeds of any size on the whole island—a sort of barkless dog, the guaquinaji, possibly a racoon,[1] and a long-bodied squirrel. Many imported domestic animals, such as the horse, the pig, the dog, the cat, and the goat, have in the course of time run wild, and are to be found in great numbers in the densest parts of the forests in the interior. Our canine friend has modified himself considerably since he first landed on Cuban soil. He has dwindled, on the one hand, into the tiny Havanese toy spaniel, and has developed on the other into the colossal molasso, which was constantly employed, but a few years back, in the highly humane sport of slave-hunting. The prehistoric sportsman, however, must, if he was an amateur of big game, have had a good time of it in Cuba, for fossils of mastadons, elephants, hippopotami, and other large and uncanny beasts of the antediluvian world, who have joined the majority countless ages ago, are still constantly to be found.

[1] The American Racoon—*Procyon lotor.*

Some members of the bat family grow to an enormous size, their wings measuring from a foot to a foot and a half from tip to tip. I remember one night, on a plantation near Puerto Principe, one of these most unpleasant monsters flopped through my bedroom window on to the floor. For a few moments I was convinced that I had received a visitation either from Minerva's very own owl or from a dusky cherub.

With the sole exception of a rather long, but not particularly harmful boa, venomous or dangerous snakes are, I was assured, not to be found anywhere on the island. This, however, is a popular error, for in most of the sugar plantations there dwells a small red asp, whose bite is exceedingly dangerous. The creature may not be indigenous; he may have come over with the first sugar-canes from San Domingo. According to the Cubans, imported reptiles, even after a short residence on their native soil, become innocuous, and it must be confessed that the scorpion, which is disagreeably prominent in the island, is less hurtful here than elsewhere. As I happen to have been bitten both by an Italian and a Cuban scorpion, I am in a position to know something about the matter. The Italian rascal stung me in the foot, and sent me to bed with a frightful pain, and a fever which lasted a week. The Cuban gentleman nipped my finger, caused me awful agony, the arm swelling up to twice its size; but I had no fever, neither was I obliged to seek my bed. My Cuban wound, I remember, was rubbed with a decoction of deceased scorpions, preserved in oil, which certainly soothed the pain, and,

further, I was plentifully dosed with Kentucky whisky. In a few hours the suffering passed off, and, after two days of extraordinary numbness in all parts of the body, I completely recovered. My private opinion is that the cure was effected by the decoction of defunct scorpions, and that no difference really exists between the poisonous qualities of the European and the Cuban reptile.

If Cuba possesses no very obnoxious reptiles, their absence is amply atoned for by the surprising collection of annoying insects of all sorts and kinds. The Cuban mosquitoes must be heard, seen, and felt, before they can be imagined. I had hitherto thought the Venetian *zanzare* diabolical pests enough in all conscience, but, when compared with their Cuban brethren, they stand as angels to demons. Then there are irritating jiggers, ants, giant wasps, infernal little midges, spiders as big as the crown of your hat, and other disreputable gentry who shall be nameless, and who, I learn on good authority, were first imported into our own unsuspecting continent from the West Indies. Alas! they are with us still! In Cuba they haunt the woods and gardens, secrete themselves in the turn-up of your trousers, and in the train of your skirt. They soon let you know their whereabouts, I can assure you! Two very remarkable insects deserve special mention. One is the large "vegetable bee," a member of the bee family, condemned by nature to carry an umbrella-shaped fungus of the *Clavara* tribe on his back, and the other, the superb cucullo, a monster fire-fly, who emits rays of light

from two eyes on his back and one in his breast. Three of these creatures under a glass shade suffice to illumine a moderate-sized room, and, if it were not for the rhythmical flickering glare produced by the breathing of the insects, it would be easy to read by their extraordinary glow.

The Cuban birds are identical with those found in other West Indian islands. Among the great variety of humming-birds, only one is recognised as indigenous to the island. All sorts of tropical fish abound, both in the sea, in the rivers, and the lakes. On the latter, the rather exciting sport of tortoise-hunting may be enjoyed, and the sportsman may chance an unpleasant encounter with the dangerous, but easily avoided cayman. Most Cuban travellers make acquaintance with the frightful-looking, but perfectly harmless iguana, at some friend's house, where he occasionally joins the family circle in the capacity of prime domestic pet. As to the lizards, they are exceedingly well represented, both in gardens and in woods, from the charming, bright-eyed little metallic green and blue opidian, to a very large and ugly brown old lady and gentleman—they usually go abroad in pairs—to be met with in your walks, and which the uninitiated are apt to mistake for a couple of miniature crocodiles. But they are simply very large and harmless lizards, with prodigiously long Latin names. Then, too, there is the interesting and ever-changing cameleon, and the pretty striped flying squirrel, and the delightful little dormouse, a long-established native of the island, well beknown, it would seem, to Christopher Columbus and

his companions, who have condescended to make special mention of his timid, yet friendly presence.

As to the flora, it is surpassingly beautiful. I shall have occasion to return to it at greater length, and will only say in this place that it embraces nearly every variety of plant, flower, and fern known in the tropical and sub-tropical zones. European fruits, flowers, and vegetables can be easily and largely cultivated on the highest plateaux of the Sierra Maestra.

The climate of Cuba is, for the tropics, a very tolerable one, quite enjoyable indeed from November to the beginning of May, during which time the heat is rarely oppressive. The summer season is extremely enervating, and in many parts of the island actually dangerous, on account of the excessive heat and the incessant torrents of rain, which together create an unhealthy steaming miasma. The forests, with their prodigious stratas of decaying vegetation, emit, especially in summer, unwholesome malarial vapours, and the lagoons and marshes on the broads are sometimes hidden for days at a time by a dense and deadly but perfectly white fog. Yellow fever is said not to have made its appearance till 1761; at any rate it is from that date only that it has been regarded as a distinct disease indigenous to the island. The deadly vomito nigro has often appeared in various parts of Cuba in epidemic as well as isolated form. It rarely if ever attacks the negroes, but has proved only too fatal to newcomers.[1] I cannot help thinking that it is mainly

[1] The rainfall of Havana is said to be 92·68 ins., more than double that of the opposite part of Florida. Very heavy, and in certain districts,

due to the filthy habits of a people unacquainted with the hygienic laws, and who do not object to have their latrines in the middle of their kitchens, and to a general system of drainage, which, even in the capital and in the other principal towns, is wretchedly antiquated. Dysentery annually carries off a great number of European colonists, especially children, and cholera very frequently decimates the blacks and Chinese, without doing the slightest injury to the whites among whom they live. The wholesomest parts of the island are in the eastern provinces, where yellow fever rarely makes its appearance. This is simply due to a healthy combination of sea and mountain breezes. The outlying island of Pinos, already mentioned, is remarkably healthy, no epidemic ever having been known there, and it is, consequently, a favourite resort with the wealthier Cubans and European colonists, who have built charming cottages amongst its fragrant pine-groves.

I am quite persuaded that Cuba could be rendered fairly healthy by proper irrigation and drainage. The towns are nearly all without proper drains, and the inhabitants are generally very uncleanly in their habits, although well-managed public baths abound. Like most members of the Latin family, the Cubans seem to have a horror of cold water, and rarely indulge in a "tub." On the other hand, to do them justice, at certain seasons of the year they

dangerous dews, fall immediately after sunset. The thunderstorms are of tremendous violence, the lightning being often so incessant as to give quite a steady light.

seem never out of the sea, which is often so warm that you can stop in it for hours without getting a chill. However, whether they wash or not matters little, for even in the best regulated families their hygienic habits apparently are indescribably filthy. Add to this state of affairs the still dirtier practices of the immense negro and coolie population, and a faint idea may be formed of the real cause of the unhealthiness of the place. I have often wondered that the pest did not carry off half the population. It *has* occasionally done so, and Yellow-Jack is always seeking whom he may devour, — generally some invalid from the United States, who has come out in search of health, or some over-robust European emigrant. As an illustration of the rapidity with which this fell disease overcomes its victims, I will relate an incident which occurred during my first visit to the island, very many years ago. On board the ship which conveyed us from New York to Havana was a certain Senator L . . . ., well known in New York and Washington for his good looks and caustic wit. In his youth he had been engaged to a lovely Cuban girl, whose parents had sternly rejected his suit, and had obliged their young daughter to marry a wealthy planter very much her senior. She had recently become a widow, and our friend, who had already been to Havana to lay his fortune at her feet, and had been accepted, was hastening back to claim her as his bride. On our arrival in Havana we all breakfasted together, the party including the still very handsome widow Doña Jacinta. In

the afternoon the bridegroom went sketching in the market-place. Yellow-Jack laid his hand on him, and before morning he was dead! The funeral took place on the very day appointed for the wedding. I shall never forget the procession. The whole of Havana turned out to witness it. The church of the Merced, where the Requiem was sung, was so crowded that several persons were seriously injured. The floral offerings were of surprising beauty. All the Donnas in the town, in their thousands, accompanied the *cortège* conveying the coffin to the port, where it was placed on an American steamer to be taken to New York for burial. The local papers contained many really charming sonnets and poems addressed to the afflicted Doña Jacinta, who, by the way, some time afterwards followed her lover's body to New York, and there became a Little Sister of the Poor.

CHAPTER II.

Population.

There must have been people in Cuba in the very night of time, for some prehistoric race has left its trace behind. Numerous stone implements of war and agriculture, closely resembling those so frequently found in various parts of Europe, have been unearthed, near Bayamo, in the Eastern Province. Then, again, within the last thirty years, a number of *caneyes* or pyramidical mounds, covering human remains, many of them in a fossilized condition, have been discovered in the same part of the island. Specimens of rude pottery, bearing traces of painting, have also been dug up in various places, and I have in my possession a little terra-cotta figure, representing an animal not unlike an ant eater, which was found in the neighbourhood of Puerto Principe, and exhibited in the Colonial Exhibition of 1886. Many small earthenware images of a god, wearing a kind of cocked hat, and bearing a strong resemblance to Napoleon I., are often picked up in out-of-the-way places, but we have no other evidence that the ancient Cubans were blessed with any conspicuous knowledge of the fine arts. The majority of the friendly Indians who greeted Columbus

on his first landing are believed to have spoken the same language as the Yucayos of the Bahamas, and the aboriginal natives of Hayti and Jamaica. Grijalva declares they used a language similar to that of the natives of Yucatan—at any rate, on his first expedition into that country, he was accompanied by some Cubans, who made themselves understood by the inhabitants. Although Columbus mentions the good looks of the early Cubans with admiration, there is every reason to believe that the Discoverer flattered them considerably. They seem to have been men of medium height, broad-shouldered, brown-skinned, flat-featured, and straight-haired. The women are described as better looking than the men, and do not appear to have disfigured themselves by ornamental cheek slashes and other hideous tattooing. They were, as we have already seen, an amiable set of savages, quite innocent of cannibal tastes. Their huts were made of palm branches, and their cooking was performed in the most primitive fashion, over a wood fire, lighted in the open air. Some of their tribes, more advanced in civilization than others, wore aprons decorated with shells or with the seeds of the caruba, strung together in rather pretty designs.[1]

[1] Between the years 1512–15 the whole island had been explored, and the aborigines had already disappeared. The poor, timid, harmless creatures offered no resistance to their conquerors. One chief alone, the Cacique Hatuei, tried to escape. He refused baptism lest it might lead to his being condemned to spend eternity in heaven, in the company of his pious persecutors, who consequently tormented him to death. This anecdote, related as it is by the Spaniards themselves, gives the measure of their conception of Christian charity. There are, however, two sides to every question, and I remember to have read in a very old Spanish

In order to understand the very complex matter known as the Cuban question, it is necessary for the reader to know something about the exceedingly mixed population of the island, whereof "Cubans" form by far the greater part. The present population, estimated at over 1,600,000, may be divided into six sections [1]:—The Cubans, the Spaniards, the Creoles, the foreigners, the coloured folk of African origin, of all shades, from the deepest ebon to the lightest cream, and the coolies or Chinese.

For three hundred years Cuba was exclusively in-

work, on the West Indies, an assertion that the aborigines of Cuba were afflicted with a certain fell disease which rendered their disappearance imperative. This may account for the persistence with which their extermination was carried out, and also for the recorded fact that in 1554 a number of native families were brought to Havana, and isolated in a Lazaretto built for their reception near Guanabacoa.

[1] Statistics of Cuban population are very unreliable. The prolonged rebellion, frequent epidemics and other causes have considerably diminished the number of inhabitants, especially of late years. Probably, the actual population does not exceed 1,300,000. According to Eliseé Reclus, in his splendid *Universal Geography* (admirably translated into English, and published by Messrs Virtue & Co.), "Despite revolutions, wars, and epidemics, the population of Cuba has increased at least sixfold since the beginning of the last century. Enforced immigration of whites, negroes, Chinese and Mayas has ceased, and free immigration is now encouraged by grants of land. But independently of this movement, there is considerable natural increase by the excess of births over deaths. In time of peace, the annual increase may be estimated at from 15,000 to 20,000, a rate according to which the whole population might be doubled in fifty years. It rose from 600,000 in 1811, and 1,000,000 in 1841, to 1,521,000 in 1887 (last census), and may now (1891) be estimated at 1,600,000." As to the coloured population, it is estimated as amounting to between 600,000 and 700,000 all told, but I very much doubt if it at present reaches anything like that figure, owing to the number of deaths from starvation, epidemic, etc., which have occurred during the last ten years, and the cessation of all coloured immigration into the country.

habited by Spaniards, or people of Spanish descent. The political and religious conditions of the country were therefore far more favourable to peace and unity, and the island was much less difficult to govern, than in these troublous times of ours.

The "Cubanos" are the descendants of Spanish colonists, who have inhabited the island for at least two generations. The slightest admixture of African blood debars the enjoyment of this distinction. The first Spanish immigration into Cuba began very soon after the conquest of the island, and consisted mainly of adventurers who had accompanied the earlier expeditions, and who settled permanently in the country, after having returned to Spain, and transported their wives, and such members of their families as were ready to follow them, to their new homes. Almost all these individuals were either of Castilian or Andalusian origin. A few years later, emigrants began to come in from the Basque Provinces, and from Catalonia.

The descendants of these early colonists form the present aristocracy of Cuba, and many of them bear names which have cast lustre on Spanish history.[1]

Cuba was governed, for over three centuries, by the laws which bound the other Hispano-American colonies.

[1] Since the abolition of slavery, some few Galegos have emigrated from Spain, mainly to seek employment in the houses of the wealthy. It may interest the reader to know that the peasantry of Galicia have for many ages supplied Spain and Portugal with their best domestic servants. They are an honest and frugal race, faithful to their employers, and excellent cooks to boot. They are much sought after in Cuba, where they obtain higher wages than they can earn in the Peninsula.

These were framed by Philip II., and are still known as *Las Leyes de Indias.*

The unbending nature, and jealous religious orthodoxy of the Spaniards, offered scant encouragement to the establishment of settlers of any other race or faith. The Inquisition soon reigned in the island, in all its gloomy and mysterious horror. To its merciless pressure, and frequently cruel action, we may perhaps ascribe the instinctive hatred of the "powers that be"—so characteristic of the modern Cuban—even as hereditary memories of the doings of Mary Tudor and her Spaniard husband have implanted a sullen distrust of the Spanish nation in the breast of the average Englishman.

From the physical point of view, the Cubans are inferior to their Spanish forefathers, a fact which may be attributed, perhaps, to the effect of an enervating climate on successive generations. Still, it has been remarked that they do not seem to have deteriorated, intellectually, to the same extent as the descendants of the French and other European creoles in the West Indies. They are lithe, active, and occasionally very good-looking, in spite of their pasty complexions and somewhat lustreless dark eyes. They are certainly more progressive in their ideas, and more anxious to educate their sons, at all events, to the highest possible standard, than are their Spanish cousins. A remarkable impetus was given to education in Cuba by the celebrated Las Casas, who governed the island from 1790. He increased the endowment of the University of Havana, which had been established in 1721, and

greatly extended its sphere of action, by creating several important professorial chairs, and notably one of medicine. He assisted the Jesuits in improving their colleges. It should be noted, to the credit of this much maligned order, that the Fathers provided their pupils with a thorough classical education, and also instructed them in foreign languages.

During the great Revolutionary and Napoleonic periods there was considerable chaos in the island, and the vigilance of the censorship became so relaxed, that the large towns were flooded with French and Italian literature of an advanced kind, and the ex-pupils of the Jesuits devoured the translated works of Voltaire, Rousseau, and Beccaria with an avidity which must have sorely scandalized their orthodox instructors. The Voltarian spirit thus introduced amongst the better class of Cubans has endured to this day, and though they pay every outward respect to their religion, they are exceedingly sceptical both in thought and speech. During the last seventy years, again, the country has been overrun by Americans, who have introduced every form of Protestantism, from Episcopalianism to Quakerism, and even Shakerism. This large acquaintance with varied schools of religious thought has had its effect in broadening the horizon of the Cuban mind. Many young men are sent to schools and colleges in the United States, in England, in France, in Germany even, or else to the Jesuits' colleges at Havana and Santiago. Yet the mother country refused for years to admit even the best class of Cubans to any share in the administration of the

island, and though within the last two decades this rule has been somewhat relaxed, the result, politically speaking, has not always been satisfactory, even to the natives. In the legal and medical professions they have attained brilliant success, and some very large fortunes have been made. The majority, however, follow the life of planters, or engage in mercantile pursuits. Here again there is cause for trouble. In bygone days the Spanish hidalgos were granted large estates in Cuba, and though they rarely visit the country, they still retain them, entrusting the management of their property to agents and overseers. Among these absentee landlords are the Aldamas, Fernandinas, dos Hermanos, Santovenios, and the Terres, whose palaces in the Cerro quarter of Havana have stood uninhabited for years, except, perhaps, for an occasional and rare winter visit. Still there are, or were, until quite lately, many wealthy Cuban planters who reside on their plantations, with their wives and families. A few years ago—I daresay it is so still, on such estates as have not been devastated by the Rebels or the Spaniards—the grown-up sons lived with their parents, each attending to a separate department of the plantation, until the father died. Then one of them —the eldest, as a rule—took over the whole estate, paying each of his brothers a proper proportion of his net yearly earnings, and if sufficient frugality was exercised, he was able to pay them a share of the original property into the bargain. But even when these events took place, they did not necessitate the separation of the family.

The Cubans are naturally a domestic and affectionate people, exceedingly happy in their home relations. In many a Hacienda, from one to four or five families will live most peaceably, under the same roof. The men, as a rule, make excellent husbands, and are passionately fond of their children, whom they are apt to spoil, and often ruin, by allowing the coloured servants to over-indulge them. In these patriarchal homesteads, the children, being not a little isolated from other society, become exceedingly attached to each other. When the girls attain a marriageable age they are placed in seclusion, under the charge of a governess, or else sent to one or other of the great convents in the Capital managed by French and Spanish nuns of the Sacré Cœur, Assumption, and Ursuline orders. The results of this system are not always fortunate. Premature marriages abound. Many a Cuban is a father before he is eighteen years of age, by a wife a couple of years his junior—a fact which may account, even more, perhaps, than the much-blamed tropical climate, for the physical inferiority of the race. Then again, as is invariably the case in slave countries, a pernicious laxity in morals is tolerated, and Cuban life, in cities and plantations alike, will not, I have been assured on good authority, bear too close investigation. If the ancestors were devoted to their Voltaire and their Jean Jacques, the modern descendants are equally zealous readers of all the most suggestive French and Italian novels. The fine literature of the mother country has never found much favour in Cuba, and the educated islanders are far

more intimately acquainted with Zola, Gaboriau, Gyp, and Huyssman than with Cervantes, Calderon, Lope, and Fernan Cabalero. They do not even patronise their own national drama, preferring modern French and Italian plays. It is a curious fact that even really excellent Spanish troupes have failed to attract audiences in Havana, whereas French and Italian companies have done tremendous business during the few weeks of their stay in the city. I shall have occasion to speak elsewhere of the great love of music which has long distinguished the Cubans, whose principal Opera House has been kept up all through the century to a pitch of excellence worthy of one of the great European capitals.

The Cuban women, even in the lower classes, are generally far better looking than the men. Those of the upper ranks are often extremely fascinating. Their features are small and delicate, their eyes dark and fine, and their hair magnificent. Their feet and hands are small, and although they cannot vie in grace with their Andalusian sisters, they have a distinct and striking charm, peculiar to themselves. They have a regrettable weakness for plastering their faces with rice powder, to an extent which sometimes makes them look absolutely ghastly, and, like most Creoles, they are apt, except on formal occasions, to neglect the elementary duty of personal neatness. They are fond of lolling about in their own homes, in wrappers, none of the cleanest, and are much addicted to swinging in hammocks, coiling themselves up on sofas, and, above all, rocking lazily to and fro, in low American chairs.

Of society, even in the city of Havana, there is little or none. A few large parties are given by the wealthier families in the winter season, but very few people can converse easily on any interesting subject. Conversation must soon flag, indeed, in a country where the intellectual pabulum of the fair sex consists, generally speaking, of a singular combination of the Catholic prayer-book and the worst stamp of French novel. The usual way of spending the evening in a Cuban house is to place two long rows of rocking-chairs opposite one another, and sit chatting, everybody, meanwhile, smoking the inevitable cigarette. In some of the houses, music of a high order may be heard, and not a few of the Cuban ladies sing charmingly. During the Carnival, a good many dances take place in private houses, but even these are extremely dull, for as soon as a gentleman has danced with a lady, he is expected to lead her back to her rocking-chair, where she sits smoking in smiling silence till the arrival of another partner. It would be thought highly improper for a young man to start a conversation, let alone a flirtation, with an unmarried girl.

The general want of that association between the sexes, so necessary to the welfare of each, makes the Cuban women indifferent to the opinion of the Cuban men. They care for nothing but the most childish chatter and gossip, have no desire to improve their minds, no ambition beyond that connected with their own personal comfort and vanity. They marry when they are mere children, from twelve years of age to

about eighteen,—and if no suitor has appeared upon the scene by that time, they are looked on as old maids. Belonging to a most prolific race, those who marry soon have large families about them, and devoted as they are, in most cases, to their children, they find their happiness in their domestic circle. The haughty spirit derived from their Spanish ancestry is not dead in the hearts of the Cuban ladies. Many of them have proved the fact, of late, by qualities of self-sacrifice, courage, and splendid heroism, which have gone far to carry the revolutionary struggle to its present phase. The exceedingly pernicious habit of bandaging infants in swaddling clothes is still prevalent, even in the best regulated Cuban families. This may account for the excessive infant mortality, for though as many as eight or ten children are born to most parents, they rarely succeed in rearing more than three or four.

There is a saying in Havana that "the church is good enough for the old maids of both sexes." The women are pious from habit. Nearly all of them begin the day by going to Mass, and in Holy Week they literally live in church. But, for all this, religion does not seem to have any deep influence on their lives. The men make no pretence to piety. Generally speaking, Catholicism in Cuba has become a mere matter of form and custom, although there are doubtless many sincerely pious people in the island, who practise all the Christian virtues, both in public and in private. Still, I fear the clergy can hardly have done their duty by their flocks for many generations past. Yet, I am assured, a more evangelical spirit is stirring among

them at the present moment. This we may fairly ascribe to the vigilance and zeal of the present Pope, Leo XIII., who has appointed more energetic and able bishops than any of his predecessors, since the Apostolic age. I am assured that the present Archbishop of Santiago and Bishop of Havana—the island is divided into two dioceses—have effected many remarkable reforms, not only among their clergy, but also among the laity.

To resume: the Cubans are, as I have already indicated, the descendants of Spaniards born on the island. They form considerably over a third of the population. The true Spanish population, which is not at all numerous, includes the absentee grandees, who own at least a fourth of the island, the numerous officials sent out from Spain, and the very considerable garrison which has always been kept in Cuba, to maintain order, and suppress all attempts at open rebellion. The Spaniards keep very much to themselves, although, of course, many of them are allied with Cuba by family ties, and are on very friendly terms, in times of peace, with their own kinsfolk. Still, there is a local feeling against them, as the representatives of bad government in a sorely-troubled colony. Their manners and customs are not quite identical with those of the natives. Their women, for instance, have a far higher sense of dignity than the native ladies. They are more sincerely pious, and, in many cases, far more highly educated and accomplished. On the other hand, the men are extremely overbearing and exclusive. Their manners are ridiculously elaborate, but their hospitality,

though courteously proffered, is less genuine than that of the native Cubans. When a Cuban says, "Come and stay," or "Come and dine with me," he means it, and is hurt, however humble his circumstances may be, if you refuse.

During the last fifty years, a great many Americans have established themselves in Cuba as planters, merchants, and shopkeepers. They come from all parts of the United States, and associate very little with the Spaniards, although they are generally very friendly with the Cubans. The principal American settlements are at Cardenas, quite a modern town, and known as "The American City," Havana, Cienfuegos, and Santiago. The Spaniards, on the other hand, suspect and dislike the Americans. There are not many English established on the island. The railroads, however, and some of the best tobacco estates, are mainly in British hands. There is a small French colony, consisting mainly, I am assured, of persons who cannot live in their own country. In the old slave times, most of the overseers were Frenchmen who had been expelled from France, and not a few were well known as having "served their time." There is also a small Italian colony, and a very considerable German contingent, who live their own lives, apart from their neighbours. Until within quite recent times no religion but the Roman Catholic was tolerated on the island, but, at the present moment, there is, if anything, greater freedom of worship than in Spain itself. From all I have heard, Cuba is the last place in the world where people trouble their heads over

theological or philosophical questions. Life is essentially materialistic, and the chief aim and struggle of existence is to get as much comfort as may be, out of an exceedingly uncomfortable climate.

The Jews in Cuba barely number 500, and are mostly of Spanish origin, and engaged in trade. A great many Jews fled to the West Indies from Spain, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but few remained in the Spanish possessions. The danger was too great. Five or six of the Cuban Jewish families are reported wealthy, and are much respected, but they keep entirely to themselves. We next come to the two last divisions of the heterogeneous population of the Pearl of the Antilles,—the coloured race, and the Coolies.

The coloured folk of Cuba, who vary, as I have said, from the deepest ebony to the lightest cream, form a little over a third of the whole population. That they are not more numerous in proportion to the whites, is due to causes which I shall endeavour to explain hereafter. At a very early date, slaves were introduced into Cuba, to replace the massacred aborigines. At first the black merchandise was exceedingly dear; in fact, according to ancient authorities, slaves were "worth their weight in gold." But, in the seventeenth century, the importation from Africa began on a great scale, though very few females were at first landed, as the majority died on the way over. This fact necessitated a system of constant replenishment of the males, and it was only in the last century that negresses were brought to Cuba in any great

numbers. Their appearance was followed by the inevitable result—a peaceful invasion of small niggers. And the dusky Venus found scores of worshippers, among the haughty Dons. Even worthy Brian Edwards, the pious author of the *History of the West Indies*, did not neglect to pay tribute to the charms of the "Sable Aphrodite" in an Ode from which I cannot resist culling the following lines:—

Her skin excell'd the raven plume,
Her breath the fragrant orange bloom,
  Her eye the tropic beam.
Soft was her lip as silken down,
And mild her look as ev'ning sun
  That gilds the Cobre stream.

The loveliest limbs her form compose,
Such as her sister Venus chose
  In Florence, where she's seen,
But just alike, except the white,
No difference, no—none at night,
  The beauteous dames between.

O sable Queen! thy mild domain
I seek, and court thy gentle reign,
  So soothing, soft, and sweet,
Where meeting love, sincere delight,
Fond pleasure, ready joys invite,
  And unbought raptures meet.

The prating Frank, the Spaniard proud,
The double Scot, Hibernian loud,
  And sullen English, own
The pleasing softness of thy sway,
And here, transferr'd allegiance pay,
  For gracious is thy throne.

Notwithstanding the nominal abolition of the slave trade, something like half a million of slaves have been imported into Cuba since the first treaty between England and France,—for the gradual abolition of slavery was officially signed in 1856. The traffic continued even as late as 1886, when slavery was at last entirely and finally suppressed. It was often connived at by the Governor, and other high officials at Havana, who thus increased their popularity, and their private fortunes. In the course of 1878 I was told, on good authority, of a cargo of sixty Congo negroes, which had just been landed in a small port in the neighbourhood of Havana, and sold to planters in the interior. The first step towards emancipation was the freeing of all infants born of slave parents, and of all slaves who had attained their fiftieth year. This was achieved in 1856, with very curious consequences. The infants, being deemed worthless by their parents' owners, as soon as they realised the fact that when the children were reared they would have no control over them, were purposely neglected, and thousands of them perished in their earliest years. The old folk, on the other hand, were, in most instances, turned adrift, to enjoy their freedom as best they might, as vagrants on the highways and byways, or as beggars in the towns. Not a few died of starvation, and this is one of the main causes which has reduced the coloured population in Cuba much below its natural proportion, to that of other countries, where slavery has lately existed. Many years have elapsed since slaves were publicly sold in the market-places of Havana and the

large cities, but until ten years ago, advertisements for their sale continued in the principal papers, and I hold a collection of these, which proves that very little or no attention was paid to the freedom of infants, even after the passing of the law in 1856. For the majority of these advertisements refer to children of twelve and fifteen years of age, who are generally offered for "private sale," the intending purchaser being asked to "inspect the goods at the house of the present proprietor." Here is a specimen, dated April 1885:— "Anyone who requires a nice active little girl of light colour, aged 12, can inspect her at the house of her mistress. Price to be settled between the parties privately" (here follows the address). This is a proof, if proof were needed, of how the slave laws were regarded in Cuba; and even now, I am assured, in many of the more lonely plantations, the blacks have not fully realized that they are free, and continue working gratuitously, as in the old days. On the other hand, the vast majority, being of opinion that freedom means idleness, have ceased labour altogether, and, as their requirements are remarkably modest, a number of them have departed for the woods and wildernesses, where they lead much the primitive life led by their forebears in their native Africa. These refugees have proved admirable recruits for the rebel army, and have, on more than one occasion, found an opportunity of wreaking their vengeance on their late masters' plantations and homesteads.

I do not think the slaves were any worse treated in Cuba than in the Southern States of America before

the Abolition, and, indeed, I have not noticed in Latin slave-owning countries that strong prejudice, on the part of the whites, against the blacks, which exists all over the United States, and amounts to a sense of absolute loathing. I am convinced the free blacks in Cuba are better treated than their liberated brethren in the Southern States. They are more civilly handled by the whites, who appear to me to have very little or no prejudice against them. They mingle freely with the white congregations in the churches, and are even allowed to walk in the various religious processions, side by side with their late owners. If the Americans ever conquer Cuba, they will have to deal with a coloured population which has long been accustomed to far more courteous treatment than the Yankees are likely to vouchsafe to it.

The Spanish laws for the protection of the slaves were remarkable for their humanity. According to the *Leyes de Indias*, all slaves had to be baptized, and their marriages were to be considered legal. It was unlawful to separate families. In the towns and villages, judicial tribunals were instituted, to which any slave could have recourse against his master. It was illegal to administer more than twenty-five lashes in a single week on the bare back of any slave, male or female. It was murder to kill a slave, unless, indeed, it could be proved that he had attempted to assassinate his master, or strike him, to burn his house or property, or to violate his wife, daughter, or any other white female, howsoever humble, in his employ. But these laws, unfortunately, were rarely observed.

It is true that Syndicates, as they were termed, existed in the capital and in all the larger towns, and were occasionally useful to the household slaves. But the unfortunate plantation hands were either utterly ignorant of the existence of these tribunals, or were unable to reach them. If a bold applicant contrived to apply to these organizations, his master soon found means to make him regret his temerity. The slaves were well fed, because they were considered useful beasts of burden. But during the sugar harvest they were cruelly overworked, sometimes labouring nineteen or twenty hours out of the twenty-four, and this for weeks at a stretch, without any interruption, even on the Sundays. They would often fall down exhausted from sheer fatigue, only to struggle to their feet again under the overseer's merciless whip. Personally, I witnessed very few acts of cruelty, during a visit to the island before the emancipation. Once I did see a number of blacks in the coffee fields wantonly flipped with the whip, simply to keep them "spry," as the Yankees say. One horrible instance, however, took place to my knowledge. A strikingly handsome mulatto had escaped into the woods. For a week after his recapture he was daily subjected to the most horrible tortures, the ostensible object of which was to strike terror into the souls of such of his fellow slaves who might be tempted to follow his example. They subjected him to torments too shocking for description, and rubbed his wounds with *agua ardiente.* The poor wretch, writhing in agony, and shrieking with pain, was bound hand

and foot to the stump of a tree. The strangest part of it was that the niggers for whom this torture, which eventually ended in death, was intended as a warning, did not seem impressed by its horror. They merely laughed and shrieked like so many fiends—possibly they were accustomed to such scenes, and callous. The excuse given for the diabolical treatment of this particular slave was that he had escaped into the forest, where a number of other runaways were in hiding, and had formed a dangerous association, with the object of pillage and incendiarism. I afterwards learnt that the master of the plantation on which the awful crime took place was notorious for his brutality, and consequently shunned by all his neighbours. A year or so later, he was arrested on some charge or other connected with the ill-treatment of his slaves, and after paying a heavy fine, found it to his interest to leave the island. He came to Paris, where he was well known for his eccentricity and extravagance, and there died some years ago. Even in the case of this unfavourable specimen of the Cuban planter, the household slaves were treated with the utmost indulgence, and petted and pampered to their hearts' content. They were as vicious, idle, happy-go-lucky a lot as ever existed. I did hear some horrible stories of fiendish cruelty devised by spiteful mistresses, and inflicted upon their female servants. One, for instance, which may or may not have been true, of a lady who, because her own eyes worried her, stabbed out those of her waiting-maid with pins. Perhaps the worst features of slavery in Cuba were, as I have already stated, the

length of the working hours, and the fact that the masters considered their religious duty to have ended with the wholesale administration of baptism. It never entered their heads to teach the poor wretches any lesson beyond that of implicit obedience to their own will and caprice. Even the rudiments of the catechism were absolutely forbidden. Many a worthy priest has found, to his cost, that any attempt to Christianize the field hands was the worst possible mistake he could make in their owners' eyes. It not only involved him in difficulties with the masters, but with his own ecclesiastical superiors. The Jesuits and Franciscans were persecuted, and threatened with expulsion over and over again, because they persisted in their efforts to convert the negroes. The fact is, the masters were quick to understand that the ethics of Christianity are not compatible with slavery. Yet many household slaves received a religious education rather elaborate than otherwise, were obliged to attend morning and evening prayers, and to say the Rosary, a very favourite form of devotion at the present time with all Cuban negroes, who will sit for hours in the glaring sun, telling their beads and smoking cigarettes, with the oddest imaginable expression of mingled piety and self-indulgence on their faces. Although the days of slavery are long since passed,—and they were quite as harmful to the whites as they were to the negroes,—the condition of the dark population in Cuba has not greatly improved. On some of the more lonely plantations, as I have pointed out elsewhere, they still seem unaware that they are emancipated, but the vast majority

have foresworn all regular employment, and live as best they can, from hand to mouth.

That portion of the coloured population of Cuba which has been free for several generations, is in better case than the corresponding section in the United States. The negroes belonging to it earn their living as labourers, workmen, servants, hackney-coach drivers, messengers, and even as musicians, in the various towns. Some few are fairly well off. Whatever their vices may be, they are by no means ambitious, and are contented with the simplest pleasures. The men love a glass of *agua ardiente*, and the women delight in any scrap of cast-off finery with which they can parade the streets, and show themselves off to the admiration and envy of their neighbours. I fancy that half the old ball dresses in Europe find their way, after various vicissitudes, to Cuba. On a Sunday or a feast-day, the ebon ladies sally forth in all their glory, arrayed in their white sisters' cast-off finery, with low necks and short sleeves. The matter of underclothing is frequently altogether overlooked, shoes and stockings never by any chance appear, but a bright flower is invariably stuck in each woolly pate. Some of the holiday makers sport a pair of long kid gloves, which have the oddest possible effect. In church the dusky beauties squat, beads in hand, upon the floor of the nave, which is reserved for their accommodation, while the gentlemen darkies stand round in the side aisles. When Mass is over, the sable congregation pours forth into the sunny streets, each member, almost without exception, armed with a cigarette. The little negro

children are the sweetest little rascals upon earth, and I can quite understand the enthusiastic lady who was heard to exclaim "Oh, why can't we have black babies who turn white when they grow up." These said black babies are inconceivably quaint, and the older children charming, and very intelligent, till they reach their twelfth year, when their brains suddenly appear to cease all development, excepting in the imitative arts. The Cuban negroes are madly fond of music, and although they prefer the dreadful tom-tom, and their own barbaric sounds, imported, doubtless, from Africa, they will crowd the galleries of the Tacon Theatre to listen to Italian operas. When I was last in Havana, nearly every darkie you met was whistling the Toreador song from "Carmen," the favourite opera then being performed, to the accompaniment of an orchestra largely composed of coloured people,—a peculiarity which would never be tolerated in the States, where no white conductor would lead a mixed band, and where half the audience would leave the house on beholding woolly heads bending over instruments played by sable hands. Many members of the Tacon orchestra, one of the best in existence, are full-blooded negroes, and, with their co-operation, not only Italian, but Wagnerian opera, is successfully performed.

Slavery has unfortunately been replaced, in Cuba, by coolie labour, a form of the same cruel institution, which, for some occult reason, has never excited the same amount of horror in Europe, possibly because it does not bear the actual name of slavery, and because most people imagine the wretched coolie

sells himself, instead of being sold. In 1877 there were 43,000 Chinese workmen on the island, all that remained out of 100,000, originally imported, of whom not less than 16,000 had died on their way out from China. At the present moment the coolies number something like 40,000. These poor wretches do not bring their female belongings with them, and are consequently reduced to a condition of enforced celibacy; for so great is the contempt in which these voluntary slaves are held, not even the lowest negress will have anything to do with them. Despised by the whites, and detested by the blacks, they lead a miserable life, and die like flies, in the scorching climate. The very partial success of the coolie immigration scheme led, some years ago, to the importation of Mayas from Yucatan, but this has not been followed by happy results; and what with the depreciation of tropical produce, the number of estates which have gone out of cultivation, and the revolutionary movement, the present condition of the coloured class, and of the coolies, is exceedingly deplorable. They have swollen the ranks of the malcontents, and form a portion of that starving multitude of which we have heard so much of late. In a word, they are workmen out of employment, starving plantation hands, and their condition seems irremediable, unless, indeed, some wealthy Power should eventually take the island in hand, and spend countless millions in the endeavour to lift it, once more, to its former condition of prosperity.

CHAPTER III.

A Brief History of the Island.

It was on the morning of Friday, 12th October 1492, that Christopher Columbus first saw the New World rising on the ocean horizon. The ardently prayed-for land proved to be an island, called by the natives Guanahanè, and by the explorer baptized San Salvador, but known to us now as the chief of the Bahamas group. After making friends with the gentle natives, and taking in supplies of food and water, Columbus, though at some loss as to which way he should direct his course, set sail once more. Such a multitude of islands lay before him, large and small, "green, level, and fertile," that he grew fairly confused as to which way to turn. He fancied he was sailing in the Archipelago, described by Marco Polo as studding the seas which washed the shores of Chin, or China, a great, great distance from the mainland. These, the Venetian traveller had declared, numbered some 7000 or 8000—rich in gold, silver, drugs, spices, and many other precious objects of commerce. Night obscured the delightful vision, and the verdure-clad islands faded into the tropical darkness. The next morning Columbus landed on a pretty islet, the inhabitants of which greeted

him in the most friendly manner, and to which he gave the name of *Santa Maria de la Concepcion.* But the extreme simplicity of their costume—they were clad in all their native innocence—and the absence of all signs of wealth, led the Discoverer to think that perhaps, after all, he was still far from that part of the world mentioned by the imaginative Marco. Next, he landed on a beautiful island, now known as Exuma, to which he gave the name of Fernandina, in honour of His Most Christian Majesty. Here the ladies betrayed more native modesty, for, he gravely assures us, "they wore mantles made of feathers, and cotton aprons." He had disembarked in a noble harbour, bordered by shady groves, "as fresh and green as in the month of May in Andalusia." The trees, the fruits, the herbs, the flowers, the very stones, were, for the most part, as different from those of Spain as day is to night.

On 19th October he left Fernandina, steering towards another island, called Saometo, where, as he gathered from the natives, he was to find rich mines of gold, and a monarch who held sway over all the surrounding lands. This potentate was said to dwell in a mighty city, and to wear garments studded with gold and gems. He reached the island in due time, but neither monarch nor mine found he. It was a delightful spot, however, blessed with deep lakes of fresh water, and with such swarms of singing-birds that the explorer felt, so he declared, that he could "never desire to depart thence. There are flocks of parrots which obscure the sun, and other brilliant birds of so many kinds and sizes, and all different from

ours, that it is wonderful, and besides, there are trees of a thousand sorts, each having its particular fruit, and of marvellous flavour." To this enchanting island he gave the name of Isabella, after his royal patroness.

Whilst the Discoverer was seeking for healing herbs, and "delighting in the fragrance of sweet and dainty flowers," and, moreover, "believing that here were many herbs which would be of great price in Spain for tinctures and medicines," his followers were clamouring to the natives concerning the whereabouts of mines of gold and silver, which, we need hardly say, existed only in their ardent, greedy, and deluded imaginations. Whether Columbus and his companions mistook the natives' signs or not, certain it is that, for several days, he was once more convinced he was in the neighbourhood of the islands of which Marco Polo had written. The capital of this archipelago was supposed to be a city called Quinsai, and there Columbus intended personally to deliver the letter of the Castilian sovereigns to the mysterious Khan. With his mind full of such airy castles, he set sail from Isabella on the 24th October, steering, haphazard, west-south-west. After three days' navigation, in the course of which he touched at a group of small islands, which he christened Islas de Arena, now supposed to be the Mucacas, he crossed the Bahama Bank, and hove in sight of Cuba. Lost in contemplation of the size and grandeur of the new island, its high soaring mountains, which, he tells us, reminded him of those of Sicily, its fertile valleys, its long, sweeping, and well-watered plains; its stately forests, its bold promontories and headlands melting

away into the softest distance, he once more concluded that this, at last, must be the enchanted country of the Venetian explorer. Landing, he took possession in the name of Christ, Our Lady, and the Sovereigns of Spain, and christened the new country Juana, in honour of the Infanta Doña Juana. The land on which he set foot is believed to have been just to the west of Nuevitas del Principe, the seaport of the city of Puerto Principe. The objects which first arrested his attention were a couple of huts, from which the inmates had fled. Their interiors boasted no evidences of civilization or wealth. Their sole contents were a few fishing-nets, hooks, harpoons of bone, and a queer sort of dog (the breed, alas, is now extinct, I fear!), "which never barks." With the humane consideration which distinguished the illustrious Italian, though his Spanish followers can never be said to have followed his good example, Columbus ordered that nothing should be touched or disturbed in the two cabins. There was a certain foresight, too, about the order; it was more advantageous to pose as a demi-god than to run the risk of being taken for a thief.[1]

The scenery of Cuba is described by Columbus in his usual glowing language. Then, as now, it was a marvel of tropical beauty. He was specially impressed

[1] According to Las Casas and Herrera, the point first touched by Columbus was situated at the extreme east of the island, at Baracoa. Navarreto, on the other hand, declares that Columbus landed at the bay of Nipe; and Washington Irving is of opinion that it was at Nuevitas, the port of Puerto Principe. Cuba has been called Fernandina, Santiago, and Ave-Maria Alfa y Omego, but its original native name of Cubican or Cuba has alone been retained.

by the vivid splendour of the jewelled humming-birds, which hovered around the innumerable and gorgeous blossoms clustering every bough. The smaller species of fireflies he had frequently seen in Italy, but the *luccioli* of the Old World were as sparks to lamps beside the meteor-like creatures which, even on the brightest nights, made a flickering radiance in the Cuban forests. In a word, Cuba broke upon him like an Elysium. "It is the most beautiful island that eye of man ever beheld, full of excellent woods and deep flowing rivers." He was utterly convinced, now, he had reached Cipango, that wonderful spot which, according to Marco Polo, possessed mountains of gold, and a shore the sands of which were strewn with oriental pearls. A worthy native further deluded the already over-credulous Discoverer by inducing him to believe that the centre of the island, at a place called Cubanacan, literally glittered with gold. Now Cubanacan is uncommonly like Cublia-Khan, the name of the Tartar sovereign mentioned by Polo, and this confusion of names probably led Columbus and his companions to the conviction that Cuba was not an island, but part of the main continent.

Suddenly, one day, the weather changed; the sky, hitherto as blue as a turquoise, grew dark and heavy, torrents of rain began to fall, and Columbus was obliged to relinquish all further pursuit of adventure in the heart of the island, and to confine his operations to the coast.

There is nothing more pathetic in the "Journal" of Columbus than those passages which deal with the

discovery of Cuba. Illusion after illusion fades away. To-day there are reports of gold and silver mines; to-morrow someone has heard of cinnamon and nutmeg trees, and even of the humble rhubarb, but, on examination, gold and silver, cinnamon, nutmeg, and rhubarb, all prove delusions. The Spaniards showed the natives pearls, at which they merely smiled,—to them they were naught but pretty white beads. Gold did not impress them as being of any particular value or beauty; and they were understood to say that, in the more distant parts of the country, the people wore ornaments made of that precious metal about their necks, arms, and ankles. Then came an old native who announced that further on dwelt men who had but one eye, and that below their shoulders; others who had dogs' heads; and others, again, who were vampires, and sucked their prisoners' blood until they died of exhaustion, and thereby confirmed Othello's account of his adventures—

> "In lands where dwell cannibals that each other eat,
> The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
> Do grow beneath their shoulders."

Everything, in a word, was new and wonderful, and everything tended to make the Discoverer think he was approaching that object of his dreams, "the city of the Khan."

In November he was still wandering down the coast of the magnificent island, which he believed to be part of the Continent,—an error in which he continued until his death. Yet, had he but sailed three days further, he would have touched the main coast of Florida.

Certain writers assert that he landed in British Honduras, without, however, realizing that, by so doing, he had discovered the real Continent of America.

Here we must take our leave of the illustrious Discoverer and his adventures. If I have dwelt so long upon them, it has been simply in order to impress my readers with the fact that, when Columbus reached Cuba, he discovered a country, the inhabitants of which were evidently at peace among themselves and their neighbours. Yet, almost from the day of his arrival to the present time, the unhappy island has been stained by incessant tragedy. The illustrious Italian firmly believed he had brought a blessing to the natives. His arrival, alas! only signified the beginning of their extermination.

The early inhabitants, not only of Cuba, but of all the other islands, were certainly of common origin, spoke the same language, practised the same customs, and held similar superstitions. They bore a distinct resemblance to certain tribes of Indians on the main Continent, to the Arrowauk in particular. They were well made, of dark brown complexion, with goodly features and long straight hair. They went by the generic name of Charaibes or Caribees. Several distinct tribes may have existed, but the evidence is that they were all of one family, which had in all probability swarmed out of the great hive of the Mexican empire. Juan de Grijalva, a Spanish navigator, declared, in 1518, that he found a people on the coast of Yucatan who spoke the same language as

the natives of the island. According to Las Casas, and to Peter Martyr, who wrote on the authority of Columbus himself, there were about 1,200,000 souls in Cuba at the time of its discovery. This was possibly the result of some rough calculation made upon the large number of people noticed as living upon the immediate sea-board. It is certain that not Cuba only, but all the neighbouring islands, were thickly populated at the time of their discovery, and also that the aborigines were exceedingly gentle in character. They almost invariably received the European adventurers as beings of a superior order, who had alighted from some spirit world, evidently with the intention of doing them good—a conviction strengthened by the graceful courtesy which still distinguishes their descendants in Spain and Italy. This conviction was, ere long, to be cruelly shaken! The islanders, in spite of many virtues, had a moral code of the loosest description, and, if we may believe Ovando, Europe owes them its first acquaintance with one of the most terrible penalties exacted by Nature from the too fervent worshipper of Venus. Labour and cultivation appear to have been little practised by the Caribbees, who found the great fertility of their country sufficient to enable them to lead a life of delightful indolence. Their fashions never changed—since they had none to change—and their wives' milliner's bills troubled them not. They spent their time in athletic exercises, in dancing, hunting, fishing, and in fact, according to contemporary Spanish evidence, the aboriginal Cubans would seem to have discovered the real secret of life,

and to have been far more philosophical than their restless and over-ambitious conquerors.

They treated their elders with respect, and their wives with affection; and they were untainted with cannibalism and other objectionable savage practices. The discovery of fragments of ancient pottery, by no means inartistically designed, and other objects indicating a higher civilization than that for which Columbus gave them credit, would lead one to believe that the natives were not devoid of a certain degree of culture. Contemporary testimony is almost universally in favour of their firm belief in the existence of a personal Deity, who had power to reward merit and punish vice, a heaven and a hell. Columbus, according to his own account, seems, between the years 1492–4, to have acquired sufficient knowledge of the Indian language to understand a good deal of what was said to him. He had taken two Indians back with him to Spain, and had studied assiduously with them. However that may be, he declares that on one occasion, in July 1494, during his second visit, an aged Cuban made him the following speech as he presented him with a basket of fruit and flowers: "Whether you are a divinity," said he, "or a mortal man, we know not. You come into these countries with a force which we should be mad to resist, even if we were so inclined. We are all, therefore, at your mercy; but if you and your followers are men like ourselves, subject to mortality, you cannot be unapprised that after this life there is another, wherein a very different portion is allotted to good and bad men. And if you believe you will be

rewarded in a future state, you will do us no harm, for we intend none to you."

The fairy-like opening of the dramatic history of Cuba, with all the quaint descriptions of its Eden-like beauty bequeathed to us in its Discoverer's Journal, was soon to degenerate into a horrible tragedy. Not a generation elapsed before the Spaniards were deep in the very tactics which have been disgracing their behaviour in Cuba during this last decade. In the most wanton, senseless, and barbarous fashion, they fell on the wretched natives, with no other object than that of extirpating them, so as to usurp their possessions. They even went so far as to assure the poor wretches that if they would embark with them on their ships they would take them to certain islands where their ancestors resided, and where they would enjoy a state of bliss of which they had no conception. The simple souls listened with wondrous credulity, and, eager to visit their friends in the happy region described, followed the Spaniards with the utmost docility. By these damnable devices over 40,000 human beings were decoyed from their homes and ruthlessly slaughtered. Las Casas and Peter Martyr relate tales by the dozen concerning the frightful cruelty of the men whom they had the misfortune to accompany to the New World. Martyr tells us that some Spaniards made a vow to hang or burn thirteen natives in honour of the Saviour and the Twelve Apostles every morning. Certain monsters, more zealous than the rest, drove their captives into the water, and after forcibly administering the rite of baptism, cut their throats to prevent their

apostacy. But I will not harrow the reader with further accounts of the astounding cruelty shown by the Spanish conquerors of Cuba. I will simply repeat with their own historian, Martyr, "that in the whole history of the world such enormities have never before been practised." If any further testimony were needed, we have that of the venerable Las Casas. Even Oviado, who strives to palliate his countrymen's barbarities, confesses that in 1535, only forty-three years after the discovery of the West Indies, and when he himself was on the spot, there were not above 500 of the original natives left alive in the island of Hispaniola.[1]

This wholesale massacre may have been carried out with a view to ensuring the complete Spanish repopulation of the islands. The destruction of the natives naturally led, in course of time, to the importation, on a very large scale, of negro slavery, and the unnatural trade continued until its final abolition, which took place some twelve years ago. Traces of Indian blood are still evident amongst the inhabitants of the wild regions in the eastern part of Cuba, who boast indeed that they are the "Caribbees." The women are especially beautiful, and remarkable for the extraordinary length of their hair, which sometimes touches the ground. A female attendant in the house of a planter whom I visited in this part of the island some years ago, was,

[1] Unfortunately, when we come to examine the matter closely, we soon discover that similar atrocities have always accompanied discoveries of new lands and peoples. The swarming native populations of North and South America have nearly all disappeared, and not precisely on account of an advancing civilization. The unhappy aborigines of Africa have suffered a similar fate.

I was assured, of undoubted Caribbean descent. She was rather tall, copper-coloured, and her hair, when she let it fall loose, nearly reached her ankles, perfectly straight, and intensely black. She was not a slave, and was treated with respect and kindness by her employers.

Although Columbus revisited the island three times before he returned to Spain, to rest his weary bones in that peace his enemies so persistently denied him, he died, as I have said, in the full conviction that it formed part of the Asiatic continent, and it was not until 1508 that, at the command of Nicola Ovanda, a certain Captain Sebastian circumnavigated the island, and established the undoubted fact of its being completely surrounded by water. In 1511, Columbus' son Diego, then Governor of Hispaniola, otherwise Hayti, sent Diego Velasquez to Cuba, with full authority to colonize it. This process he performed by parcelling out the island among his followers and reducing the natives to slavery. The poor creatures, never having been accustomed to hard work, rebelled, and were forthwith mercilessly exterminated. Velasquez founded many towns, among them Baracoa, Bayamo, Trinidad, Puerto Principe, Santiago de Cuba (in 1515), and San Christobal de Habana (Havana) (in 1519), this last city not exactly in its present position.

More interesting by far than Velasquez was his lieutenant, Hernando Cortez, eventually to be known as the intrepid explorer of Mexico. The lustre of his career in Cuba was stained, however, by his ferocious treatment of the aborigines, whom he con-

demned to work in his newly discovered copper mines, and tortured to death because they refused to obey their taskmaster. His love affairs, on the other hand, were romantic, and are still enshrined in the legendary history of the island. His great, if cruel, name figures in many a folk-lore tale, but no allusion is ever made to his subsequent adventures on the main continent. Velasquez, too, is not forgotten. His Governorship had evidently many features of excellence, and if he bears the shame of having introduced the curse of negro slavery, he must be given credit for having planted the first sugar cane in his fair domain.

After his death, in 1524, the history of Cuba is a blank until the year 1538, when Hernando de Soto landed in the island, and fitted out, in the harbour of Santiago, the celebrated but unfortunate expedition to Florida, by means of which he hoped to annex that country to the Spanish territory. The undertaking, one of vast importance to the future welfare of the New World, was disastrous in many ways. The flower of the Spanish colonists perished in numerous battles with the natives, Cuba was drained of her European population, and the progress of the island lamentably retarded. Meanwhile, the venerable Las Casas had settled himself in Havana, and started many wise reforms. Thanks to him, the future enslavement of the natives was rendered impossible. The benevolent law, unfortunately, came all too late—the great majority had already perished. Las Casas built several charitable institutions and hospitals in various parts of the island, notably at Havana and Santiago, and obtained for

Havana the grant of civic rights, as capital of the island. For a few years Cuba enjoyed a measure of peace and prosperity, interrupted by fierce occasional raids by French, Dutch, and English buccaneers and pirates.

The great Buccaneering period in West Indian history, from the second quarter of the sixteenth century till the end of the seventeenth, is one of the most romantic and exciting that can be conceived. This celebrated association of piratical adventurers maintained itself in the Caribbean seas for over a century, by dint of audacity, bravery, and shrewdness. It was organized for a systematic series of reprisals on the Spaniards; but in the course of time all sense of honour disappeared, and its members indulged in indiscriminate piracy. Its name, singular to relate, is derived from the Caribbee word *bucan*, a term for preserved meat, smoked dry in a peculiar manner. From this the French adventurers formed the verb *boucaner* and the noun *boucanier*, which was eventually adopted, oddly enough, by the English, whereas the French preferred the word *filibustier*, a possible corruption of our "freebooter," still used to designate a certain portion of the Cuban rebels. The real motive for the existence of the buccaneers was the universal detestation in which Spain was held in the West Indian Archipelago. The Spanish assumption of a divine right to half of the New World, in accordance with the grant bestowed on them by Pope Alexander VI., and traced in his own hand on the famous Borgian map, and the diabolical cruelties practised by them upon all foreign interlopers

who chanced to fall into their hands, led to an association for mutual defence among all adventurers of other nations, whom the reports of its fabulous wealth had attracted to this part of the New World. Their policy was war to the death against all Spaniards. Their code was of the simplest. They lived in community: locks and bars were proscribed as an insult to their honesty. Each buccaneer had his comrade, who stood by him when alive, and succeeded to his property at his death. Their centre of operations was the island of Tortuga, near San Domingo, where, when not hunting the Spaniards or being hunted by them in return, they enjoyed peace of a kind. Their life was wild and terrible, and their history teems with cruelty and bloodshed, but the lurid page is lighted here and there by tales of romantic adventure, chivalrous valour, and brilliant generalship. Cupid, too, occasionally lent his aid to soften the rugged asperities of the buccaneer's career. Who has not heard how Peter of Dieppe fell in love with, and carried off, the daughter of the Governor of Havana? and of how Van Horn lost his life in saving his daughter's honour? Pre-eminent amongst such names as L'Olonnais, Michael de Busco, Bartholomeo de Portuguez, and Mansvelt, stands forth that of Henry Morgan, the Welshman, who organised fleets and armies, besieged rich cities, reduced strong fortresses, displayed throughout his long career an absolute genius for command, was finally knighted by Charles II., and ended his wild and spirited career as Deputy-Governor of Jamaica, a somewhat tame conclusion! Had he loved gold less, and power more, he

might have died Emperor of the West Indies, but he was content to retire into comparative obscurity with his enormous fortune, after having made the western hemisphere, from Jamaica to Rio, ring with his name and fame. The buccaneers were then, as we see, a thoroughly well organised association of sea-banditti, consisting mainly of English, French, and Dutch adventurers, who harassed the coast of Cuba for over a century, and finally, with the connivance of their respective Governments, laid hands on Jamaica, Hayti, and others of the islands. In 1528 they even ventured to attack Havana, set the town on fire, and reduce it to ashes. There were no fortifications to repel them then, and the straw and wooden buildings burnt merrily. When the buccaneers evacuated the ruins, Hernando de Soto, the future discoverer of the Mississippi, hastened from Santiago, where he was residing, and set himself to work to rebuild the city in its present position, and surround it by well-designed and constructed fortresses. So great was the terror inspired by the buccaneers, that special laws were enacted in Cuba to protect the seaports from their predatory attacks. People were ordered to keep within their doors after certain hours of the night. Every man was commanded to wear his sword, not only by day, but by night, and it was death to assist any buccaneer who attempted to escape, after falling into the hands of the Spaniards. In 1556, Jacob Sores, a famous pirate, whose much-dreaded name was used by the Cuban women to frighten their unruly children, again attacked Havana, reduced the fortress, and sacked the church and city.

Terrible stories are told of the outrages and murders which he committed, and of his hair-breadth escape from being captured, which he owed to a Spanish lady who had fallen desperately in love with him. After the departure of Sores and his gang, Havana and the other growing cities of the island were fortified afresh, so that when Drake arrived in 1555, he thought twice before attacking the capital, and sailed away without firing a shot. In 1589 Philip II. built two castles, the Morro and Los tres Reyes (The Three Kings), designed by Giovanni Batista Antonelli, an Italian architect in his employ. These exist to this day, though, of course, greatly modified, especially of late years, by being adapted to modern purposes of warfare. Havana now had become too strong for the buccaneers, and although they frequently threatened it, they dared not venture near enough to do much harm. The town repulsed the persistent attack of the Dutch Admiral, Jolls, who menaced it from August to September 1628.

During the seventeenth century, Havana and the other large towns of Cuba were greatly extended, surrounded by walls (portions of which, as well as the picturesque old gates, were recently standing), and soon became renowned throughout the West Indies for their wealth and luxury. The long series of Spanish Governors, or Captains-General, as they were and are still called, made a point of importing splendid equipages, plate, china, and even pictures by the great Spanish masters. When His Excellency went abroad, it was in a gilded coach, not unlike that of our Lord Mayor, drawn by twelve mules, caparisoned in yellow, red, and

gold, the national colours of the kingdom. A host of slaves of every tint, wearing gorgeous liveries, followed, some on horseback, others running by the side of the sumptuous vehicle. Trumpeters preceded, and men in armour closed the procession. His Excellency's consort, who had to enact the part of Vice-Queen, was instructed, before leaving Madrid, in all the formidable etiquette of the Spanish court. Those members of noble Spanish families who had established themselves, at an early period, in the colony, continued to bear their titles, and formed an aristocracy which held aloof from the untitled planters, and attended the court of the Governor with all the state it could possibly assume. These magnates, likewise, went abroad in gilded coaches, drawn by four, six, and even eight richly caparisoned mules, and had their trains of gaily liveried slaves. Horses were at one time scarce in the island, but before the end of the seventeenth century they were numerous enough, and the volante, a picturesque carriage, evidently a modification of a similar vehicle then in use in the Peninsula, made its first appearance. Another feature of those days, which has long since disappeared, was the state barges which served to convey the rich and highly-born across the harbour, and which, if I may rely on a contemporary engraving now before me, were richly carved and gilded, and rowed by as many as twenty oarsmen in gaudy costumes. In another print, dated 1670, representing the market-place at Havana, a number of ladies are seen wearing the old Spanish costume, farthingale and mantilla *au grand complet*, as we see them in the pictures of

Velasquez, and attended by slaves carrying China silk parasols with deep fringes, to shield their mistresses from the sun. In one corner a slave is being sold, while in another a sacred image is carried in procession by a number of friars. Half-naked negroes are running about hawking bananas, oranges, and pineapples. To the left of the market-place is a church, now no longer in existence, which must, I presume, have been that of San Domingo, annexed to which were the prisons of the Holy Office, which undesirable institution was established early in the 16th century, soon after the foundation of the colony. It worked in Cuba with as much fierce cruelty as in all the other Spanish dominions, and *autos da fé* of heretics and heathens were a frequent form of entertainment. Early, too, in the 17th century, a good-sized theatre, where the plays of Calderon and Lope de Vaga were doubtless performed, was opened in Havana. In Holy Week, *autos*, or sacred dramas, were given in the open, "weather permitting." In a word, Havanese life, in those far-off times, was a reflection of life in Spain as it has been depicted by Cervantes and Lesage, and the Countess d'Aulnoy.

Very soon after the Conquest, the Church obtained large grants of valuable property, and down to the first quarter of the present century a good fifth of the island was Church property. Most of the great religious orders were represented—including the Benedictines and the Carthusians. The Franciscan and Dominican friars had a number of priories in various parts of the island, and were much esteemed by the people, whom they steadily befriended. To their credit, be it re-

corded, the Dominican friars occupied themselves a great deal with the condition of the slaves, obtained the freedom of many, and redressed the wrongs of thousands. The Jesuits made their first appearance very soon after the creation of their celebrated order. They established themselves in Havana, Santiago, Matanzas, and Puerto Principe, where they opened Colleges for the education of the sons of the upper classes. There were also many nunneries, peopled generally by sisters from Europe, who educated the daughters of the wealthy, and gave primary instruction to the children of the people. As is usually the case in Catholic countries, numbers of churches were built, some of them of considerable architectural pretensions, in the well-known Hispano-American style, of which many excellent examples are still extant, not only in Havana, but throughout the whole of South America. Some of the more popular shrines, like that of Neustra Señora de Cobre, the Lourdes of Cuba, were, and are still, rich in *ex votos*, in gold, silver, and even jewels.

The Holy Week ceremonies still remain rather crude reproductions of those which annually attract so many hundreds of visitors to Seville. But notwithstanding the existence of many learned and estimable prelates and priests, the general character of the clergy in Cuba has been indifferent, and I am afraid the Cubans have ever held the gorgeous ceremonies of their Church in greater affection than her moral teachings.

Up till 1788, the Cuban Church was ruled by a

single bishop, but in that year it was divided into two dioceses, each covering about one half of the island. In 1804, Santiago, the eastern diocese, was raised to the dignity of an archbishopric. The other, which contains the city of Havana, still remains a bishopric.

The European revolutions of the end of the last and the beginning of the present centuries had their effect on Cuba, and a great number of monasteries and convents were closed, their inmates scattered, and their property confiscated.

Unfortunately, the Inquisition, which had been implanted at an early period everywhere in the Spanish colonies, with the object of compelling the aborigines and the imported slaves to embrace Catholicism, was used as a means of overawing refractory colonists, who were soon made aware that either open or covert disapprobation of the proceedings of their rulers was the most deadly of all heresies. From the middle of the 17th century until the close of the 18th, the annals of the Havanese Inquisition contain endless charges of heresy against native-born Spaniards — charges which were in reality merely expressions of political displeasure, and had nothing whatever to do with religion.

The palace of the Holy Office and its prisons, which stood close to the Church of San Domingo, were destroyed many years ago, and are now replaced by the old market-place of Cristina, once the scene of an unusual number of *autos da fé*—a favourite form of religious entertainment in South America, it would

appear, for in a curious old book, dated 1683, which I picked up in Havana for a few pence, the author complains of the dull times, "nobody, not even a negro, having been burnt alive for nearly six months." A Havanese *auto da fé*, in the palmy days of Spanish supremacy, must have been quite a pretty sight, including, as it did, an allegorical procession to the place of execution, with children dressed in white as angels, and little nigger boys as devils, tails and horns complete, dancing before the condemned, who, of course, wore the traditional *san benito*, a sort of high mitre and shirt, embellished with demoniacal representations of Satan and his imps, capering amid flames and forked lightning. Then came the Governor and his court, the civil and military officials, the clergy, the monks, and the friars singing the seven penitential psalms—in a word, everything "*muy grandioso y espectacolos.*"

The early years of the 18th century were exceedingly prosperous for Cuba. The buccaneers and pirates had almost entirely ceased from troubling. The sugar trade was at its zenith, and although the Spanish administration was vile, the governors rapacious, and the taxation preposterous, colossal fortunes were made by the Cuban planters, and the name of the island was synonymous with the idea of wealth and riotous living. The Havanese carnival was almost as brilliant in its way as that of Venice, and public and private gambling was tolerated on a scale which attracted adventurers from all parts of the southern hemisphere. Those were halcyon days, disturbed in 1762 by the rather

unexpected appearance, in the port of Havana, of an English war squadron of 32 sail, with 170 transports, bearing a considerable body of troops under the command of his Grace of Albemarle and Sir George Picknell. This formidable armament, altogether the largest America had yet seen, laid siege to the city, which surrendered after an heroic defence of two months' duration. The British troops were landed and marched on Guanacaboa, from the heights of which place they fired down upon Morro Castle and the city proper. The Spaniards made a fatal mistake—blocking up the harbour by sinking two vessels at its mouth. This they did to exclude the English and prevent the destruction of the Spanish fleet. But though they did shut out the English they also imprisoned themselves, and the enemy, seeing it was impossible for the Dons to escape, even if they would, directed their whole attention to their land attack. After a gallant struggle, the Spaniards, who numbered some 27,600 men, surrendered, and were permitted to march out of the city with the honours of war, the spoil divided by the British amounting to £736,000. The English troops next took Matanzas, and remained in possession of this portion of the island of Cuba for nine months, when, by the Treaty of Paris, it was restored to Spain, in exchange for Florida. During the British occupation the trade of the country was greatly improved by the importation of slaves from other British possessions and by the newcomers' superior knowledge of agriculture; so that the invasion proved, on the whole, a distinct benefit to the country, opening out a new era of prosperity for the Spaniards and other

colonists. It has been said, indeed, that the real prosperity of the islands dates from our occupation, which ended July 18, 1763.

About 1765 there was a remarkable emigration of Frenchmen, partly from Martinique and partly from the mother-country into Cuba. The new colonists brought improved agricultural implements, and not a few of them opened shops in the chief cities, and did a large trade in French goods. Some French missionaries also arrived about the same time. These were mostly Jesuits, who, when they had acquired the language, began to preach practical sermons, which were greatly relished by the inhabitants. The French introduced apiculture, a branch of industry which has flourished ever since, and which has enabled the Cubans to supply the neighbouring islands with wax candles at a much cheaper rate than those hitherto imported from Europe. It is curious to notice, in some of the old log-books still preserved, the numerous entries as to the importation of wax candles made at Havana, to Jamaica, Trinidad, and Nassau. In the log-book of the ship "Royal George," which was in the harbour of Havana on 16th June 1810, I find this entry—"Sent two men over to the town to purchase wax candles, which are very well made in this city, and also 20 bars of French bees-wax, and some soap for friends of mine in the Bahamas."

In 1763, France having ceded Luisiana to Spain, Don Antonio Alloa sailed for New Orleans, to take possession in the name of Their Catholic Majesties. He was so ill received as to be obliged to return forthwith to Havana, where Marshall O'Reilly, an exile of

Irish origin, organized an expedition to Luisiana, and seized the capital, which, however, was not held for very long.

A very interesting incident took place in 1776. The United States were struggling for their independence, when their first embassy, headed by the famous Benjamin Franklin, arrived in Paris in the spring of that year, and solicited authorization from Louis XVI. to proceed to Madrid, to implore Don Carlos III. to grant them the aid and protection of Spain. Two members of the embassy, Messrs Arthur and Charles Lee, were allowed to present themselves at court, and the king accorded them a most gracious reception, and cordially promised them his support. His Majesty permitted Mr John Jay, a prominent representative of the American Congress, to remain in Madrid to continue negotiations, which resulted in Spain's affording the Americans truly practical assistance in the shape of money and men, the Spanish Minister for the Interior, Conde de Florida-Blanca, making them several grants of money out of the treasury. Permission was also given them to raise a corps of Spanish volunteers, who proceeded to Cuba, where they were reinforced by Cubans, and embarked thence for the States. These services were rewarded by the Americans with expressions of unbounded gratitude. "The people of America can never forget the immense benefit they have received from King Carlos III.," said Washington, and a few years later, in 1780, a messenger was sent from Congress to the Spanish King, carrying with him an illuminated address of thanks and a new bill for £100,000, which

they begged him to accept, "in the name of an everlastingly grateful people." But even in those days there were doubts cast upon the "lasting gratitude" of the American people. The Conde d'Aranda, the Ambassador at Paris, wrote a letter to Florida-Blanca containing these significant words:—"This American Republic was born a dwarf, but one day she will become a giant. She will then forget the blessings she received from France and Spain, and only think of her own aggrandisement."

The administration of Don Luis Las Casas, who arrived as Captain-General in 1790, was one of the most brilliant epochs of Cuban history. With indefatigable industry he promoted a number of public works of the first importance, introduced the culture of indigo, extended the commercial importance of the island by removing, as far as his authority permitted, the trammels imposed upon it by the old system of ecclesiastical and aristocratic privileges, and has left a glorious name in the long list of Captains-General, only equalled by that of Tacon in our own century.

The great French Revolution produced a prodigious impression throughout the whole of the West Indies. In many of the neighbouring islands, especially in Jamaica and San Domingo, the negroes revolted, and the action of Toussaint L'Ouverture, who had started as a Royalist, but who, on the emancipation of the slaves in 1794, went over to the Republic, was a subject of common talk in Havana, where the Spaniards had great difficulty in suppressing a popular rising on the part of the Cubans, who were already heartily disgusted

with their maladministration. On many of the plantations the more intelligent negroes, discovering that a decree for the emancipation of slavery had been passed in the French colonies, clamoured in vain for a like act of grace from the Spanish Government, and finally rebelled, escaping into the woods, where they formed themselves into bands, which soon became a dangerous nuisance, and were ruthlessly suppressed by the cruel methods which have ever characterised Spanish rule. Throughout the last quarter of the 18th century the Cubans, as distinguished from the Spanish, manifested a strong desire to free themselves from the oppression of the mother-country, and not a few ardent spirits were made to feel the power of the Holy Office, their patriotism being skilfully interpreted as heresy, and punished accordingly. I think I am correct in considering the year 1766 as the date of the commencement of the Cuban Independence movement, which has lately culminated in a breach of the prolonged peace of two continents. But this is a subject which will require another chapter, and this brief history of Cuba must close, for the present, on the threshold of the century which has only two more years to run—years destined, in all probability, to witness the opening of a new era, one, let us hope, of peace and prosperity for the Pearl of the Antilles.

CHAPTER IV.

The Beginnings of the Rebellion.

The difficulties of governing a colony blessed with so heterogeneous a population as Cuba, are, as may well be conceived, great and manifold. The ordinary newspaper reader is apt to conclude that his favourite daily fully instructs him as to the Hispano-Cuban question, and takes the Spaniards for a set of damnable inquisitors, who harry, torture, and starve the angelic Cubans out of sheer deviltry, precisely as the unlucky Abd'ul' Hamid is supposed to have given his personal supervision to the Armenian massacres. The Cuban business, like all other great political and social questions, is a very complex one, and, in order to gain even a general idea of its intricacies, some knowledge of its origin must be obtained.

Spain's greatest mistake has been the persistent obstinacy with which she has attempted to govern her colonies by the sword and the crozier—a combination of military and ecclesiastical methods which, successful as it may have been in the earlier periods of her history, has proved ominously fatal in our times, and especially so in Cuba, where, since the end of the last century, education has made considerable strides, and the better

class of colonists have watched, with rising enthusiasm, the great revolutionary wave which has swept over Europe and America alike.

The youth of Cuba entered heartily into the spirit of the times. Yet, when the Great Revolution affected Spain, and spread to her colonies, which, for the most part, rose in open rebellion against her, Cuba remained faithful to the mother country, — in spite of her keen sympathy, expressed and actively testified, for the United States in their late struggle for independence. At the same time, Cubans were beginning to realise the fact that they themselves were none too well governed; and indeed for over a century and a half the Spanish islanders had been chafing against official exactions, and against the obsolete form of government established in the island. The famous colonial code, *Las leyes de Indias*, already mentioned, was still in force, and unmodified, as yet, to suit the exigencies of a newer civilization. In 1766 there had been a distinct movement against the then Captain-General,—so the Governor of the island was called,—who had taken upon himself to levy a tax on all slaves imported, which tax he was accused of applying to his own benefit. Then came the incident in the reign of Charles III., when Spain afforded active assistance to the American insurgents, and a number of Spanish and Cuban volunteers started from Havana, where they had assembled, to join the rebellion against Great Britain. The words "freedom and independence" were thus early rendered familiar to Cuban ears. A little later, following the example of the great Anglo-

Saxon colony of the North, all the Spanish settlements in South America broke into open revolt, and clamoured for their liberty. The name of Bolivar was soon to set men's pulses beating under the Southern Cross, even as that of Washington had lately stirred all hearts in the Northern Hemisphere. The Spanish empire in the New World was tottering to its fall. One by one Spain's colonies were torn from her feeble grasp. The long-drawn revolution in Mexico, which, after fermenting for nearly half a century, tossed the unhappy country to and fro from 1810 to 1824, had a definite effect on the destiny of Cuba, which for over three centuries had been partially dependent on the government of that once opulent colony.

In a Catholic country, when priestly influence becomes apparently paramount, it is frequently opposed by an under-current of surreptitious free-thought. This condition of things began, in the case of Cuba, quite early in the present century. A number of secret societies were then formed, the majority of them affiliated to the great Masonic Brotherhood, which has worked so mightily to undermine Spanish dominion in the Southern Americas. For the Cuban lodges, like those of Italy and France, have always occupied themselves with the religious and political questions so rigorously avoided by English Masons. Their influence has always been opposed to that of the clergy, and therefore to that of a Government which has ever encouraged the interference of the Church in temporal matters. For many years, Cuba has been covered by a network of mysterious revolutionary associations, such as the

Racionales Caballeros, Soles de Bolivar, Aguila Nigra, and a host of others, too numerous to mention. But these, for a considerable time, showed no prominent activity—a circumstance accounted for by a sudden change in the fortunes of the island. I have said that, until 1800, Cuba had been dependent upon the Vice-royalty of Mexico, which was bound to pay all the expenses of the maintenance of her public institutions, ports, and roads. As the Spanish power in Mexico declined, the island, as may be imagined, suffered; her ports soon fell into a deplorable condition, and, owing to absolute monopolies imposed upon her trade, —held partly by the Mexican Government, and partly by a chartered company established at Seville,—the visits of merchantmen to her harbours grew few and far between. The Revolution, which set a Bonaparte on the Spanish throne, temporarily removed this incubus, and in 1805 the Cuban ports were thrown open to general commerce, with the result that, whereas in 1804 less than a dozen ships, all belonging to the Seville company, passed the Morro Castle at Havana, in 1806 over a thousand vessels from all parts of the world cast anchor in the harbour. And further, the French emigrants who had fled, twenty years earlier, from the San Domingo massacres, had persuaded their Cuban hosts to devote their attention to the sugar trade. Cane planting had for some years increased, in all directions, and so rapidly, that travellers declared they scarcely recognised the country, once so beautiful with its scores of dainty green coffee plantations,—so exquisitely lovely when the star-like blossoms scent the air,

—now replaced by far-stretching acres of unsightly cane. Be this as it may, sugar and tobacco were soon grown in great abundance, and Cuba, with her ports freed from all the mediæval trammels which had hitherto shackled her commercial capacities, was soon able to supply more than half the total amount of sugar then consumed in Europe. This commerce resulted in an era of exceptional prosperity, which lasted until 1825. Meanwhile the Cubans proved their passionate affection for their mother country by refusing to acknowledge the Napoleonic supremacy, and even by openly joining the enemies of their deposed sovereigns. Every member of the Cuban National Assembly took the oath to preserve his country for his former king. Such ardent patriotism won the island the proud title of "Cuba la sempre Fiel!"—"Cuba the ever Faithful."

The restoration of the Spanish monarchy, in 1814, was hailed with the utmost enthusiasm by the colonists. Nevertheless, even at this time, feuds between the Spaniards and the Cubans were frequent, the latter lampooning the former as Godas or Goths; and it is even said that when the Spanish ladies wore their hair long, the Cuban Señoras cropped theirs short—whence the name of pelonas (croppies) given them by their rivals to this day. Well would it have been for Spain had she availed herself of this outburst of loyalty in the richest corner still left to her of her once prodigious empire! But insensate counsels prevailed, and the mother country, by her ruthless abuse of Cuban confidence, gave fresh and lamentable proof of her incapacity for colonial government.

It must be admitted that, whether at home or abroad, the Spaniards have never been an easily governed people. The renowned Guicciardini, Florentine ambassador to Ferdinand the Catholic, reports a very interesting conversation with that monarch concerning his subjects.

"Ah!" said the father of our Katherine of Aragon, the Spaniards were ever essentially a nation of warriors, and also most undisciplined! Everybody wants to be at the top of the tree, and nobody consents to obey. The soldiers are better than their officers. Every Spaniard knows how to fight, but none knows how to command either himself, or others." Whereupon the Florentine historian adds, by way of rider—"This, in all probability, is because discord is natural to the Spaniards,—an illustrious, but arrogant, irritable, and turbulent, though generous, race!"

If they were unmanageable in the days of their grandeur, when they had all the wealth of the Indies at command, we may easily conceive what they must be now, when they have fallen from the position of the richest, to that of the poorest, nation in Europe.

The Cubans, the descendants of Spaniards, have inherited the Spanish tendency to anarchy. When the army in Spain—as was of almost yearly occurrence, earlier in this present century — made a Pronunciamento, their Cuban brethren forthwith raised an insurrection, on some pretext or another, of their own; and, as M. Charles Benoit says in his deeply interesting work, *L'Espagne, Cuba, et les Etats-Unis*, "this natural tendency on the part of the Spanish population

in Cuba has been, if anything, augmented by the influx of emigrants from all parts of the world, who have brought with them all kinds of ideas and theories on the subjects of morals and politics, and have thereby rendered the existing confusion tenfold greater than in the good old times, when there were only Cubans—that is to say, Spanish and negroes—on the island, and everybody thought more or less alike." For all this, deep in his heart the Cuban retains an intense love of the mother country,—a passionate affection, indeed, which, should the Americans be victorious in the present war, may eventually cause them considerable trouble.

In spite of the high sounding but empty title of "Faithful Cuba," bestowed on her generous island sons, Spain subtly reverted to her old methods, and used their country as a sort of conquered El Dorado, the quickly developed resources of which she was determined to turn to her selfish account, regardless of possible consequences. The Cubans, however, who had learnt many things since the opening of the century, soon showed a distinct disinclination to submit to this process. The era of prosperity already alluded to had attracted numbers of emigrants to the island, from every quarter of the world,—more especially from the United States; and constant contact with different races and varied religions, added to the influence of the secret societies previously mentioned (which had by this time become both wealthy and flourishing), soon made their impression upon the better educated and more intelligent classes, and therefore upon the masses, who, losing that extreme respect for religious

authority, ordinarily so characteristic of the Spanish race, learnt to despise a feeble Government, which openly used its clergy for its own ends and purposes.

Fortunately for Spain, and also for her Cuban subjects, the island was administered, during the early years of the nineteenth century, by Tacon, a man of exceptional ability and energy, who recognised the immense capabilities of the country, and did his utmost to develop them. He passed many laws of a beneficent and useful nature, and, in a word, covered himself with honour, his name being even yet synonymous, throughout the island, with ideas of justice and good government. Even in his days some feeble attempts at insurrection were made, and a certain Lorenzo placed himself at the head of some 3000 rebels, mostly escaped negroes. Tacon had not much difficulty in routing him and his ill-disciplined troops. The Havana of that period was by no means a safe place of residence. It had become the gambling hell of the Americas, and it was dangerous to walk its darksome streets at night, without a considerable escort. Tacon availed himself of the opportunity created by the great fire of 1802 (April 25–26) to rebuild the quarter of the city then destroyed in a more regular style, and prohibited the future erection of wooden houses, as dangerous to the public safety. He lighted the city, suppressed the gambling saloons, prohibited the national game of *Monte*, and established a well-organized police force and a fire department. To sum it up, he proved, even in those far-off times, that under a firm hand and common-sense administration,

Cuba can be as well and as easily governed as any other country under the sun. The great Governor was guilty, however, of one dark deed: he encouraged the slave trade. Hands were needed all over the Colony, on account of the marvellous impetus which had been given to the sugar industries, and the unfortunate Africans were used, so to speak, to pay the piper. In less than ten years, over a hundred thousand negroes were imported into Cuba; and as the masters never seriously attempted to civilize their field hands, the present descendants of these slaves have added not a little to the general anarchy now existing in the troubled island.

In 1812, the Cubans, still faithful to Spain, notwithstanding her many sins of omission and commission, assisted in putting down a revolt among the slaves in the neighbourhood of Bayamo, captured Aponte, the rebel chief, and hanged him, together with eight of his associates. Hundreds of negroes were massacred, or else driven into the forest, to die of want.

The era of prosperity, which for nearly a quarter of a century, staved off open revolt, began to decline between 1822 to 1837. The United States had consolidated, and their increasing trade interfered considerably with that of the whole West Indian Archipelago. Spain, meanwhile, had gradually settled back into her old mediæval ways—enlivened by palace scandals and military *Pronunciamentos.* The series of governors who succeeded Tacon were, with but few exceptions, a worthless set, and the crowd of minor officials who accompanied them were mere leeches, whose sole

object was to seize every possible opportunity, legitimate or illegitimate, for lining their own pockets. Ridiculous taxes, unreasonable dues and fees, were invented and imposed. When the unfortunate Cubans raised an outcry against this wholesale robbery, they were treated as rebels, and not a few,—chiefly members of the various secret societies,—were arrested and imprisoned, and even executed, without trial.[1]

In 1835 the Cubans claimed to have their interests represented in the National Cortes by native members. The request was treated with a contempt that will never be forgotten nor forgiven. From that day, a feeling of bitter hatred and distrust has utterly severed the Cuban population from its Spanish brethren. Ties of blood have been torn asunder, and the sad truth that

[1] Perhaps it were as well if I here remind the reader that Cuba is ruled by a Governor or Captain-General, whose despotic authority is derived directly from the Crown. He is supreme head of the island's civil, military, and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and is, surrounded by a crowd of dependents of every degree, beginning with thirty-four lieutenant-governors, who preside over as many cantons or divisions of the island, each of whom, in his turn has a host of underlings. Judicial affairs are in the hands of the "Real Audienca Pretorat or Superine Court." The judicial districts, of which there are twenty-six, are presided over by an Alcalde or Mayor, who has a numerous staff of salaried satellites. The Maritime division of Cuba is subject to a Commander-General, who is at the head of five stations with centres at Havana, Trinidad, San Juan de los Remedios, Matanzos, and Santiago de Cuba. As almost every member of this army of functionaries is Spanish born, and as the Yankees would express it, "on the mash," some idea may be conceived of the waste of public money in the way of salaries, paid to men who, more often than not, have no duties to perform. But it is quite untrue to assert that no Cubans "need apply" when a vacancy occurs in this multitudinous burocracy. Quite the contrary. Many Cubans are in the civil service of the island, but they are powerless to reform abuses, and frequently are even less scrupulous than the Spaniards.

a family feud exceeds all others in bitterness, has received fresh and inevitable confirmation. The earlier insurrections of the century were invariably accompanied by the same cruel reprisals on both sides. But they brought about no permanent improvement in the condition of the people. Spain continued her obsolete and selfish policy; Cuba never ceased to rebel.

The revolutionary period of 1848 did not, as may well be imagined, pass without leaving its mark on the island. Strange as it may seem, the starting point of the fresh series of rebellions was the pretty Filarmonia Theatre, at Santiago de Cuba, where, some forty years ago, the fascinating Adelina Patti made her début. In the winter of 1850 General Lopez led a filibustering expedition from the United States, with the object of seizing Cuba, and proclaiming her independence. That his attempt was favoured, and even financially assisted, by many Americans, is an undoubted fact; but, unfortunately for its promoters, it was a signal failure. A number of hot-headed young men,—some of them belonging to the best families in the island—suspected of favouring Lopez and his companions, were arrested, and several were shot, without form of trial. As may well be imagined, the impression produced in the ancient capital of the Eastern Province, and indeed throughout the island, by this violent action on the part of the Spanish authorities, was profound, and the feeling soon reached such a pitch that no native-born Cuban would be seen speaking to a Spaniard. The Carnival gaieties were suspended, and the city was thrown into deep mourning. The

Spaniards, resolved to mark their contempt for the islanders, gave a ball at the Filarmonia. Groups of young Cubans forced their way through the terrified dancers, and proceeded to insult and disfigure a portrait of Queen Isabella II. The confusion was terrible, and many ladies were severely hurt. Yet the incident was allowed to pass without any attempt being made to discover and punish the offenders, who, by-the-way, were masked. A few weeks afterwards, a Cuban lady of high rank and great wealth, hoping to cast oil on troubled waters, hired the same hall, and sent out invitations for a *tertullia*, to which she bade representatives of both the belligerent parties. The consequences were ghastly. The Spanish officers and the Cuban *jeunesse dorée* found themselves, suddenly and unexpectedly, face to face. An unlucky jest, at the expense of an old Spanish officer, fired the mine, and in a moment the ball-room was in an uproar, and the scene of gaiety changed to one of combat. Ladies fainted, and were trampled under foot, chandeliers fell smashing to the ground, and the most awful and horrible confusion ensued. Five or six people were killed—amongst them a Spanish lady of distinction—and nearly a hundred persons were seriously hurt. As to the luckless hostess, she betook herself to Europe at the earliest possible opportunity, and there remained; but from that day to this the incidents at the Filarmonia Ball have never been forgotten in Cuba. Some of the young brawlers were arrested, and certain of them, —youths belonging to the richest families in the city,— were imprisoned in the Morro Castle, and thence trans-

ported to Ceuta, the Spanish penal station in Morocco, whence they never returned.

For some years after this gloomy event, Cuba went from bad to worse, *de mal em peyor*. But it would be useless, and, indeed, merely confusing, at this date, to enter into the details of what is, after all, merely the local history of a bye-gone time. The weak Government of Queen Isabella, which lacked even the faintest sense of providence, continued to exploit Cuba in every possible manner, and to send out needy generals, and pauper nobles, to act as Governors. In the meantime, as it may be interesting, at this juncture, to recall, the United States had already cast longing eyes on the fair Queen of the Antilles. An almost forgotten episode of this period was brought to light, but the other day, in the pages of the *Fortnightly Review*. In a most interesting article, Mme. Colmache, the venerable and distinguished widow of Talleyrand's last secretary, gives a terse and singularly interesting account of an intrigue, all the details of which are in her personal recollection. It seems that fifty years ago, Louis Philippe, seized with a desire for territorial aggrandisement, took advantage of Spain's poverty to make overtures for the purchase, not only of Cuba, but of Puerto Rico and the Philippines. As a matter of fact, the deal would have been actually concluded, but for the French monarch's parsimony. Queen Christina's representative in Paris, Senor Campanuzo, was instructed to ask 30,000,000 reals for Cuba, and 10,000,000 for Puerto Rico and the Philippines. The terms for the purchase of Cuba and Puerto Rico having been agreed, the treaty was to have been signed

at the Tuileries. But at the last moment, the Bourgeois King demanded that the Philippines should be thrown in free; and so firmly did he insist, that the Spanish representative could only declare that the treaty had better be thrown into the fire. This course was actually pursued.

Twenty years later another offer for the purchase of Cuba, and a far more offensive one, was made by the United States. In the year 1860, President Buchanan greatly alarmed the Spanish Government, by a message as threatening in its nature as that recently despatched by President M'Kinley to the advisers of Queen Christina, at Madrid. Its purport may be expressed as follows, although, to be sure, the matter was not quite so plainly couched, but the inference could not be misunderstood. "Circumstances and destiny absolutely require that the United States should be masters of the island of Cuba. That we should take it by filibustering or violence is not in accordance with our national genius. It will suit our character and honesty much better to obtain it by purchase. Let us therefore offer a fair price for it. If that fair price[1] shall be refused, we, of course, shall have a *casus belli*. Spain will have injured us, and we may declare war. Under these circumstances, we should probably obtain the place without purchase, but we will hope for better things."

This domineering proposal to annex Cuba by purchase was indignantly refused at Madrid; but Mr Anthony

[1] The price offered was £40,000,000. The Yara rebellion, which broke out in 1868, cost Spain over 100,000 men, and certainly not less than £40,000,000, the sum named for the purchase of the island by the United States.

Trollope, who happened to be in the island at the time the proposition was made, tells us it elicited the greatest possible enthusiasm there. "The plea," he writes, "under which Mr Buchanan proposes to quarrel with Spain, if she will not sell that which America wishes to buy, is the plea under which Ahab quarrelled with Naboth. A man is individually disgusted that a President of the United States should have made such an utterance. But looking at the question from a broader point of view, one can hardly refrain from rejoicing at any event which will tend to bring about that which in itself is so desirable." After all, California had been purchased from Spain by the United States, and Texas had been annexed by filibustering incursions. There can be no question that both these States, though peopled by Spaniards, precisely as Cuba was, had flourished exceedingly under the star-spangled banner. Mr Trollope gives us a picture of the public mind in Cuba in 1860, which convinces us the local opinion has undergone very little change since his day. That which he wrote thirty-eight years ago reads exactly as if it had been penned yesterday. He says—"From such information as I could obtain, I am of opinion that the Cubans themselves would be glad enough to see the transfer well effected. How, indeed, can it be otherwise? At present they have no national privilege, except that of undergoing taxation. Every office is held by a Spaniard. Every soldier in the island—and they say there are 25,000—must be a Spaniard. The ships of war are commanded and manned by Spaniards. All that is shown before their eyes of brilliance, and power,

and high place, is purely Spanish. No Cuban has any voice in his own country. He can never have the consolation of thinking that his tyrant is his countryman, or reflect that, under altered circumstances, it might possibly have been his fortune to tyrannize. What love can he have for Spain? He cannot even have the poor pride of being slave to a great lord. He is the lackey of a reduced gentleman, and lives on the vails of those who despise his manners. Of course the transfer would be grateful to him."

"But no Cuban will himself do anything to bring it about. To wish is one thing, to act is another. A man standing behind his counter may feel that his hand is restricted on every side, and his taxes alone unrestricted, but he must have other than Hispano-Creole blood in his veins if he do more than stand and feel. Indeed, wishing is too strong a word to be fairly applicable to his state of mind. He would gladly consent that Cuba should be American, but he would prefer that he himself should lie in a dormant state while the dangerous transfer is going on."

The United States, whose hands were soon busied by the outbreak of their own Civil War, dropped the Cuban proposal, and the whole question remained in abeyance for some considerable time. Meanwhile matters had reached an unendurable pitch. It was almost impossible for a Cuban to obtain justice, and the Governor and his Spanish satellites continued their systematic methods of bribery and corruption. Yet money was plentiful in the island, where the commercial class had been immensely swelled by numerous American and English fortune-

hunters, who had purchased large estates from impoverished Cubans, and had started sugar and tobacco-growing on an improved system in various parts of the island. In 1865, the Cubans, driven to despair by the vexatious treatment of their rulers, addressed a petition to Queen Isabella II., which bore not less than 20,000 signatures, and implored Her Majesty to consider the pitiable condition into which Spain's most splendid possession had fallen, and to send out a Commission to inquire into the abuses which rendered their lives unendurable, and prevented them from earning an honest living for themselves and their children. Not the least of these abuses were capricious and questionable management of the Banca Espanōl, the only bank in the island. In answer to this petition, the Junta created a body of twenty-two Cuban commissioners and twenty-two Spanish, which original number, however, was unjustly increased by the admission of a perfect army of Spanish nobles and officials. The Cuban members, thus left in a minority, were not very hopeful of obtaining much benefit from the Commission. They made a sensible proposal for the gradual diminution of the taxes, especially those connected with the export trade, and submitted a plan for the gradual emancipation of the slaves. One of their principal schemes for diminishing taxation,—by the substitution of a direct tax on the total revenue, instead of the existing vexatious system of indefinite and capricious taxes on the export and import trades,—was rejected, or rather it was turned against their real interests. The Custom House duties were cunningly diminished, and the tax

on the total revenue of the island raised from five to ten per cent,—a clear case of robbing Peter to pay Paul, which exasperated the island population beyond measure. The arrangement of the question of the abolition of negro slavery was also eminently unsatisfactory. A decree provided that newly-born slave children should be considered free, and that all slaves over fifty years of age should be immediately emancipated. I have elsewhere pointed out the unfortunate results of this system. The slave trade continued in Cuba up till 1886, and during that time, notwithstanding all the treaties signed between England and Spain, several hundred thousand African negroes are said to have been imported into Cuba, and sold with the connivance of the officials, who levied a private tax of a gold doubloon, or about £3, on every woolly head so purchased. To quote Mr Trollope once more—"The bribery and corruption that goes on in Cuba is known to everyone, and best known to the Government of Spain. Under these circumstances, who can feel sympathy with Spain, or wish that she should retain her colonies? Does she not daily show she is unfit to hold them? There must be some stage in misgovernment which will justify the interference of bystanding nations, in the name of humanity. That rule in life which forbids a man to come between a husband and wife is a good rule. But, nevertheless, who can stand by quiescent, and see a brute half murder the poor woman whom he should protect?"

At last the insurrection broke out in earnest at Yara, in the Eastern District. A number of determined men,

assisted, undoubtedly, by the secret societies to which I have drawn attention in an earlier part of this chapter, commenced a systematic propagation of the theory that unless force were used, and the assistance of the United States and of the already emancipated States of South America secured, there was no chance of justice for Cuba. At the head of the movement was a man of very remarkable character, Carlos Manuel Cespedes. He was no penniless adventurer, but a Cuban gentleman of large means,—one of the wealthiest planters in the island. He was not at first inclined to sever the island from the mother-country, for he was, by nature, essentially loyal. Even before embarking upon his undertaking he warned the Spanish Government of his intention, and of the danger it ran by persisting in its old methods. A sincere Catholic, he refused to join in any of the overt anti-religious propaganda then so greatly in vogue among revolutionists. He desired to remain on friendly terms with the clergy of the island, but at the same time he hoped that, under a more liberal form of government, the Cuban clergy would administer the Catholic Church in the same progressive spirit which has made her so respected and powerful in the United States. To these fine qualities of heart and head Cespedes added the advantages of a noble presence and of an extraordinary oratorical talent.

In the beginning of 1865—the year of the petition to Queen Isabella,—Cespedes' plans were nearly matured, but for various reasons he did not intend the rebellion should break out before the autumn

season. Unfortunately, the individual to whom the funds destined for the insurrection had been entrusted made off with the money, and betrayed the secrets of the organization to the Spaniards on condition that he was allowed to keep his booty. This act of treachery forced Cespedes' hand, and he was obliged to move earlier than he had originally intended. He found himself, not only without funds, but without arms. When his troops inquired what weapons they were to use in the coming struggle, he replied, with something of the spirit of an ancient Roman: "With those of our enemies" ("*Con las de nos enemigos.*") The few guns in his possession were distributed among his followers, and he, with his band of some 500 men of all degrees and, indeed, of all colours, started for Puerto de Buniatos, in the vicinity of Santiago. On the way they seized all the fire-arms they could find in every plantation they came across. For two months they remained encamped outside the city walls without being attacked by the handful of Spanish troops which composed the garrison. As a matter of fact, there were exceedingly few Spanish troops in Cuba at that moment—barely enough to keep order in the island. At the end of December, however, 30,000 troops were landed, and presently augmented by a body of volunteers collected from various parts of the island, among them a number of Catalan Cubans, who shortly proved themselves absolute savages. A number of Spanish warships also arrived in the ports of Havana and Santiago. Orders were sent from Madrid to use the sternest measures for the immediate suppression of

the insurrection. The first step taken in this direction was the burning of the vast plantation owned by Cespedes himself. This was the signal for a series of massacres and reprisals all over the island. As if by magic, the absentee Spanish grandees' great plantations were set ablaze. Then the Spaniards fired the Cuban plantations, and in a few weeks a quarter of the island lay in ashes, and thousands of slaves and workmen wandered about idle, homeless, and starving. The insurgents, who were almost without arms, were obliged to take refuge in the interior of the island, where they raised the Cuban flag—the American stripes with one solitary star—and were soon joined by men, women, children, and slaves, all flying before the Spanish soldiery. The rebels installed themselves in the city of Bayamo, which for several weeks they contrived to hold against the enemy. A conspiracy on the part of certain Catalans, who had joined their forces, being discovered, the traitors were put to death. On learning this the Spaniards, who had encamped some miles from the city, suddenly appeared before its walls. Seeing resistance was hopeless, Cespedes, with the consent of the inhabitants, set the city on fire, rather than see it fall into the hands of the enemy. An awful massacre ensued, in which the Spanish soldiers spared neither man, woman, nor child. On the other hand, the rebels, it must be confessed, were guilty of the most horrible atrocities. In vain did Cespedes and his lieutenant, Ignacio Agramonte, implore their followers to remember that those who fought for liberty and progress must set the example of mercy. The rebel

bands were not men like unto their leaders, gently born and carefully educated, but a horde gathered together out of every social class and every race, indeed, for thousands of plantation hands had fled their burning hovels, and taken up arms in a cause which they believed would lead them to liberty. Words fail to describe the scenes of horror which ensued. The dogs of war were let loose upon the unhappy island. Up and down it, from one end to the other, the plantations flamed. Towns and villages were laid in ruins, and to add to the terrors of the situation, famine and pestilence stalked the land, even as at the present moment. Hundreds of young Cubans, suspected of favouring the revolution, were arrested on the most flimsy pretexts. A jest, the wearing of a certain coloured flower, the whistling of a popular tune, were sufficient to work a man's ruin. The prisoners were shot in dozens, and shipped off by hundreds into penal servitude. By the end of 1868, the Spanish garrison consisted of not less than 80,000 men, all well armed, and whose officers, in their mad desire to stamp out the rebellion which had now assumed formidable proportions, laid no restraint on their subordinates' licence. In April of the following year a proclamation was issued by the Spanish Commander-in-Chief at Bayamo, which decreed that any individual over fifteen years of age found beyond the limits of his property and unable to give an account of himself, should be forthwith shot. All deserted houses, or all houses over which a white flag of truce did not float, in sign of peace and devotion to the Government, were to be immediately reduced

to ashes. This order only increased the horrors of the situation. Scores of planters who were ignorant of its existence, and who were going peaceably on business intent between their plantations and the neighbouring towns, were shot by the soldiers, who were only too delighted to display their zeal and rob their victims, and hundreds of houses were pillaged.

At this juncture Cuban affairs began once more to attract universal attention in the United States. The interest taken in the rebellion and the rebels by our American cousins was not, in all probability, exclusively platonic. Whether this was the case or not, they contrived to supply the insurgents, not with money only, but with men and arms, so that the insurgent army rose in a short time to 55,000 well-armed men, mainly entrenched in the mountainous districts, whence they were able to make successful raids. On the 10th of April 1869, at the city of Guaimaro, in the very heart of the island, the first Cuban Chamber of Deputies was opened by Cespedes, and the new assembly forthwith proclaimed Cuban independence and the establishment of a republic. General Cespedes was unanimously elected President, and his brother-in-law, Manuel de Quesada, who had served under Juarez, of Mexican fame, assumed the name of commander-in-chief of the Cuban army. Slavery was formally abolished. Freedom of worship was established, and equality of all in the eyes of the law affirmed. The young Republic even ventured to send envoys to the three countries which had shown her most sympathy, — England,

France, and the United States. The Envoy Extraordinary of Cuba to the United States of America, Morales Lumus, was, however, received with great coolness by General Grant, who steadfastly refused to recognise the new Government. As a matter of fact, whilst Cuba had been fighting for her independence, Spain had dethroned the kindly Queen Isabella, and replaced General Prim at the head of the Iberian Republic. The great Republic of the New World had naturally hailed the chief of a revolution which had driven Isabella II. from one of the oldest thrones in the Old World; while Prim, who was anything but the visionary he is generally supposed to have been, had arrived at the conclusion that Cuba cost the mother country far more than she was worth, and had actually proposed—through Hamilton Fish, then Secretary of State—the sale of the island of Cuba to the United States Government for a sum of 100,000,000 pesetas! It is only fair to add that, by the suggested agreement, America was to grant the island its independence, abolish slavery, and proclaim an armistice, pending the proclamation of peace. Poor Lumus' heart sank within him, for he knew the Spanish character by heart, and was perfectly well aware of what Prim was driving at. If he himself remained in power, the United States would be allowed to do with Cuba pretty much as they thought fit. Otherwise, if the ex-Queen or her son were restored, the Marshal hinted an intention of securing the island for himself. With a heart like lead, Lumus returned to Cespedes. The outlook was of the darkest, for the fate of the mother country

as well as that of the newly-born island Republic hung in the balance.

General Sickles proceeded at once to Madrid, with full powers from the United States Government, to conclude the proposed sale of Cuba to the American Republic. The negotiations proved much more difficult than President Grant had believed possible, Prim placing a thousand obstacles in the way of the final conclusion of the bargain. Many believed that he had been won over to the pro-slavery party. After a wearisome and fruitless mission, Sickles was recalled. Later on an incident occurred—that of the *Virginius*—too lengthy to recapitulate here, which resulted in the capture by the Spaniards of that filibustering vessel, which was proceeding from the United States to assist the rebels with arms, ammunition, and men. The *Virginius* was taken to Havana, and sixty-one prisoners, including several Englishmen and twenty-two Americans, were ultimately shot. On November 5th, 1869, the leaders of the adventure, Navaro, Ryan, Jesus del Sol, and Pedro Cespedes—the President's brothers—were put to death by the Spaniards, and their heads carried in triumph through the streets. All this is far-off history nowadays,—interesting, nevertheless, if only as a record. The indignation excited throughout the United States by the *Virginius* business was indescribable, and very nearly ended in a declaration of war. Spain eventually thought it wise to make, through Señor Castelar, an abject apology, and granted an indemnity to the families of the unfortunate men who had been executed. The *Virginius* was formally

handed back to the Americans, but the luckless vessel, which had been severely damaged, began to leak, and sank on her way home from Bahia de Honda to New York. This closed, and somewhat tamely, an incident which was within an ace of bringing about, some thirty years earlier, the events now taking place.

Whilst the negotiations for the release of the disabled *Virginius* were dragging their slow length along—they were conducted by the Spaniards with all the dilatoriness which distinguish them—that nation underwent a weird series of political changes and intrigues. The Republican party, although flattered by Prim, who wished in his heart to be the first President of the Iberian Republic, was evidently distasteful to the majority of Spaniards, accustomed to the pageantry of the solemnest and most stately of European Courts. It was therefore deemed necessary to establish an interregnum with Marshall Serano as Regent, and to cast about for some Catholic prince to place upon the vacant throne of the Bourbons. Choice fell upon Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern Sigmaringen—a most luckless selection, since, by offending the susceptibilities of France, it led to the Franco-Prussian war. King Victor Emmanuel's son, Amedeo, was now offered the crown of Spain, and accepted it, swearing to observe the Constitution over the body of Prim, who had been assassinated on December 28, 1870, by an unknown hand. How Amedeo failed to satisfy his new subjects, and finally was compelled to resign his ill-fitting crown and return to Italy; how an abortive attempt to establish a Republic failed, and degenerated into anarchy; how

Don Carlos and his followers caused useless shedding of blood in the Northern Provinces; and how, finally, Queen Isabella's son was restored in 1874, under the title of Alfonzo XII., are matters of history doubtless well-known to every reader of this book, and therefore only need to be recorded as reflecting upon Cuban affairs. When the Cespedes' Republic fell, the victorious Monarchy reappeared. But rebellion, overt and covert, still disturbed the distracted island until 1874, when the tragic death of Cespedes broke down the revolutionary spirit and brought about a temporary lull.

The adherents of Cespedes had by this time dwindled to a mere handful; and, driven desperate by hunger and despair, the forlorn but still bold-spirited band took refuge in a fastness on the Eastern coast, whence they hoped to escape to Jamaica. A slave betrayed their hiding-place to the Spaniards. A fierce hand-to-hand fight ensued. Cespedes fought like a lion against overwhelming odds. His friends fell dead or wounded at his feet; but still he battled on, slaying seven of his opponents with his own hand, and wounding many others. At last, seeing all hope was lost, he fought his way through the Spaniards, and, mortally wounded as he was, flung himself over the rocks, and thus escaped his hated captors. His mangled body was recovered, carried to Santiago, and there secretly buried. The dead man was mourned, and is mourned even to this day, by all true Cubans. The stage on which he played his part was, it may be said, a little one. His life and doings may be for-

gotten beyond the limits of the country he strove to serve. But such qualities of head and heart, such fervour of self-sacrifice and steadiness of purpose, as marked the career of Carlos Manuel Cespedes, must surely entitle him to an honoured place on the golden roll of the world's true heroes. May he rest in peace!

CHAPTER V.

The History of the Rebellion Up-to-Date.

The dying Cespedes bequeathed his honours to his friend and henchman, Don Salvador Cisneros y Bétancourt, Marquez de Santa Lucia, who was forthwith elected President of the Republic. He displayed exceptional ability, endeavoured to bring some discipline into the ranks of his more or less disorderly followers, and succeeded for a time, not only in this attempt, but also in reviving the dashed spirit of the rebels in the Eastern Province. At length he wearied of what ultimately proved a thankless task, and retired to make room for Don Francisco Aquelera, who became third President of this essentially rural Republic, whose Parliament was wont to assemble in the heart of a dense forest, or in some mountain solitude.

Aquelera, although a man of marked ability, was no longer in the prime of life, and soon grew tired of the roving existence circumstances compelled him to lead. After his retirement, a new name begins to figure prominently in Cuban affairs,—that of Maximo Gomez, who was elected Commander-in-Chief of the rebel forces, *L'Ejercito libertador de la Republica de Cuba*, some twenty years ago. With a comparatively small following,

he managed, by sheer dint of audacity and profound strategical knowledge, to keep 20,000 Spaniards at bay. Gomez is a thorough soldier, one of the best the New World has possessed. I met him once, and was greatly struck by his martial bearing and his fiery black eyes, rendered still more conspicuous by his perfectly white hair, and long moustachios. He was born in 1837. Although afflicted with a terrible ulcer in his right leg, and unable to sit a horse except in a side saddle like a woman's, he is an intrepid rider, and knows not the meaning of the words fear or fatigue.

The other leader of the present rebellion is not less remarkable, Calixto Garcia Iñiguez, who began his career as a bank clerk, and who, therefore, combines with soldierly qualities of a high order, considerable financial and business knowledge.

The treaty of Zanjou, signed February 10th, 1878, put a stop, for some years, to anything like rebellion on a serious scale. A good deal of mystery surrounds this treaty, to which the President of the Republic and his secretary, only, affixed their signatures, without the formal consent of the other rebel generals, officers, and deputies. However, Marshal Martinez Campos, Commander-in-Chief of the Spanish army, approved it, although the enemies of the Cuban cause describe the document, somewhat sarcastically, as being more of a deed of capitulation than a treaty. The clauses proposing that the political organization of the island should be placed on the same footing as that of Puerto Rico, that a general amnesty for all political offences should be forthwith promulgated, that political prisoners

should be pardoned, and that coolies and fugitive slaves who had served in the Cuban army should be emancipated, met with the approval of Señor Canovas de Castillo, and the treaty was officially signed and accepted at Madrid. For some time afterwards, peace nominally existed in almost every part of the island. The rebels were not, however, wholly inactive. Notwithstanding the accepted treaty, there was still a President of the Cuban Republic, Vicente Garcia, and a Parliament, which sat in the wilderness, at stated periods of the year. In 1879 this "Parliament" was dissolved, and with its dissolution the period of the "big rebellions" closes, and that of the little wars, *la guerra chiquita*, opens. Meanwhile, Maximo Gomez, seeing there was no immediate work for him to do, betook himself to San Domingo, to bide his time, and to place himself in active correspondence with the Gran Junta, or principal Cuban Revolutionary Association, in New York.

And here it may be as well to examine rather closely two matters connected with Cuban affairs. The first is the assistance afforded to the Cuban rebels by the United States, and the second, the conditions of the rebel army, as it stood three years since, when the insurrection began to assume alarming proportions.

As far back as 1823, John Quincy Adams said: "From a multitude of considerations, Cuba has become an object of transcendent importance to the commercial and political interests of our Union. Its commanding position, . . . the nature of its productions and of its wants, furnishing the supplies and needing the returns

of a commerce immensely profitable and mutually beneficial, give it an importance in the sum of our national interests with which that of no other foreign territory can be compared, and little inferior to that which binds the different members of the Union together."

The reasons which induced Adams to make this statement have not diminished in late years; far from it, especially since the enormous development of the Mississippi valley, and of the Gulf Coast. Although there can be no question that the vast majority of the people of the United States have expressed an unselfish sympathy for the unfortunate Cubans, their politicians, and, above all, their financiers, have added to this sentiment a profound knowledge of the great value which Cuba must eventually prove to the Union, were she more firmly governed, and her American interests better protected. Among the advocates for the annexation of Cuba have been the following Presidents: Jefferson, Monroe, John Quincy Adams, Jackson, Polk, Fillmore, Pierce, and Buchanan.

A remarkably interesting article on Cuban Diplomacy from 1795 to 1898 appeared recently in *Harper's Magazine*, in which Professor Albert Bushnell traces the rise of the sympathy of the American people for Cuban independence or annexation, and points out very plainly that "when, as in 1886, slavery was definitely abolished, the Spanish Government promised other excellent reforms, but, as usual, very soon things fell back into their old rut. The Captain-General was still practically absolute; the island was saddled with the debt created to hold it in subjection; it was still

exploited for the benefit of Spain, and the same wearisome impediments were laid on foreign traders. For example, in 1880 several vessels were fired upon by Spanish gunboats outside the jurisdiction of Cuba; in 1881 an American cattle steamer, subject to a tax of $14·90, was taxed $387·40, because she had some lumber on board. In 1882 began a long drawn-out correspondence on overcharges and illegal exactions by Spanish consuls over vexatious fines for small clerical errors, and over annoying passport regulations. The most serious trouble arose out of the refusal of the Spanish authorities, to return estates confiscated during the war to American citizens of Cuban birth.

"Meanwhile trade between the United States and Cuba was advancing by leaps and bounds. In 1850 the sum of the Cuban trade into and out of the United States was $20,000,000; in 1880 $76,000,000; in 1894 $105,000,000. American capital became engaged in sugar and other industries. The two countries tried to put their tariffs on a better footing by the Convention of 1884, for the mutual abandonment of discriminating duties; in 1893 Spain accepted reciprocity under the tariff of 1890; but the Cuban authorities evaded the privileges thus conferred, on the ground that they were governed by a special Spanish translation from the English version of the treaty, and not by the original Spanish version; and it was three years before the Home Government could straighten out this petty snarl.

"In 1884–5 came some filibustering expeditions; the United States exerted itself to stop them, and there was no Cuban insurrection. On the whole, the years

from 1879 to 1894 were freer from diplomatic controversy than any like period since 1845. Meanwhile the Cubans in the United States had accumulated a revolution fund of a million dollars."

I have already stated that a network of secret societies has covered Cuba, ever since the beginning of this century. Branches of these mysterious associations have been established in nearly every city on the seaboard of the two Americas, from New York to Buenos Ayres, at Boston, Savanah, Charlestown, Norfolk, Tampa, Kingston (Jamaica), etc. Their headquarters have been established, for some five and forty years, in the American metropolis, and are known as the Gran Junta, or Cuban Revolutionary Agency.

From this centre, the rebellion has been mainly worked. It is presided over, at the present time, by Señor Thomaso Estrado Palma, who was born at Bayamo, some sixty-seven years ago, and who for a short time acted as President of the Cuban Republic. He was captured by the Spaniards, and imprisoned for several years. About 1895 he reappeared in New York, as headmaster of a Hispano-American College, and as one of the leading members of the Junta. He is not only thoroughly well aquainted with all the secrets of the rebels, but is also by no means ignorant of the movements of the Spaniards. He bears an eminently respectable character, is a man of considerable literary attainments, and, considering his age, may be described as remarkably active. The New York Junta publishes a bi-weekly paper, entitled *La Patria*, edited by Don Enrique José Varona, who, if

I mistake not, is a brother of that Varona who was shot during the affair of the "Virginius." The line of Presidents of the Cuban Republic is still unbroken, and the gentleman who at present fills the position is a man of considerable culture, and, moreover, a wealthy planter, whose estates, however, he has neglected for some years, in order the better to serve his country.

One of the great grievances of the Spaniards is the fashion in which the American Government has tolerated the existence of this Gran Junta, and the formation of branch offices, all over the States. And, when you come to think of it, it does seem somewhat intolerable that a power which calls itself friendly,—since it has a representative at the court of Madrid,—should encourage a whole network of conspiracy against a Government, with which it keeps up a constant interchange of official courtesies; but at the same time, it should be remembered that these associations cannot be suppressed, in a free country like America, so long as the members take care not to go beyond the letter of the law. Under President Cleveland, matters were otherwise. The United States Government made some pretence of moderating the zeal of the Juntas, and spent many million dollars in endeavours to prevent the departure of filibusters, to join the rebel forces. But notwithstanding the dignified policy of President Cleveland, which for some years gave the Spaniards a fair chance of pacifying the distracted island, they utterly failed to avail themselves of the opportunity.

The task of restoring order in such an island as

Cuba is one demanding almost superhuman energy and tact, and these are qualities in which the Spanish race, a naturally excitable one, is absolutely deficient. Yet it must be allowed that the Cuban civil war resembles none other that has ever been fought in any part of the world, or at any period of recorded history. Revolution, as a rule, starts from the large cities, and thence penetrates by degrees into the villages and rural districts. It is quite otherwise in Cuba. With the exception of one or two easily quelled riots in Havana, Cienfuegos, Santiago, and Bayamo, the capital cities and towns of the island have scarcely participated in the rebellion; their citizens, although for the most part Cuban born, have apparently remained aloof,—possibly because the rebellion has proved exceedingly injurious to their trade and commerce. This accounts for the curious fact that while we hear so much about the terrible sufferings of the Cuban people, and their deadly hatred of their Spanish masters, we see in numberless photographs, reproduced in our illustrated papers, and representing the departure or arrival of Spanish troops at Havana or other leading cities, such a display of enthusiasm on the part of the citizens, as we should have little expected.

The long streets are thronged, the balconies are crowded, Spanish flags float in all directions, and the troops march along under a shower of flowers, whilst young ladies are seen rushing forward to offer them refreshments. Now it must be remembered that at least two-thirds of these enthusiastic spectators are quite as Cuban as the most ardent of the rebels; but

they are people who have something to lose by the continuance of the civil war, and a good deal to gain by its cessation, therefore they eagerly welcome the Spanish soldiers, in the hope that they may suppress the rebellion, without the intervention of the Americans, a people who, however well-intentioned they may be, are, from the Cuban point of view, aliens in race, and even in religion. We should never lose sight of the fact that the rebels are not the angels some writers would lead us to believe them. Even enthusiasts, who see their budding wings, acknowledge that they have destroyed, burnt, pillaged, and retaliated, quite as barbarously as their Spanish enemies.

I remember hearing, from the lips of one who saw the outrage perpetrated, a story of some eight or ten Spanish women who, in the war of 1873, went to the rebel camp to beg the lives of their captured fathers, brothers, and husbands.

The unhappy women were treated in the most revolting manner, and subsequently butchered. Hundreds of other stories, just as horrible, have been told of Maceo, and above all, of Manuel Garcia, the ex-brigand chief, who joined the rebel army, and boldly styled himself Manuel Ist, King of the Cuban highwaymen. He surrounded himself with a gang of picked ruffians, and became the terror of all the peaceful planters of both parties, from whom he used to levy tribute, and whom he never hesitated to murder, if they refused to submit to his extortions. This abominable personage was killed on February 24th, 1895, by the sacristan of the parish church of Arcos de Canosina.

Last year the rebel army was composed, so far as I have been able to ascertain, very much as follows: 25,000 infantry without transport; 14,000 cavalry, with 13,000 horses and mules; artillery,—22 guns, 190 mules or horses, and about 800 men; the whole regular and irregular army, amounting to about 70,000 men, some 10,000 of whom are absolutely unarmed. During the last two years these numbers have probably been greatly reduced. The duty of the unarmed men consists in going round the field after a battle, and gathering up the arms dropped by the wounded and the dead. Behind this regular army, if so it can be called, is another, consisting of a horde of civilized and uncivilized adventurers, recruited from all parts of the island, and indeed from the four quarters of the globe; among them you will find field hands out of employment, the riffraff turned out of the neighbouring islands, Americans, Mexicans, Germans, Italians, and even a few Englishmen. Yet a third band follows behind this extraordinary mass of heterogenous humanity,—a mob of ex-slaves, reinforced by coolies, who may be described as camp followers, and bring their women and children with them. This formidable and incessantly moving army is divided into sections, and distributed over various parts of the island, in camps (by courtesy so called, for their tents are exceedingly few in number, and the majority have to sleep in the open, unless they have time and skill to make themselves huts with palm branches). These Cuban rebels, being acclimatized, have a great advantage over the Spaniards in pursuit of them, who, as often

as not, are trapped by "Yellow Jack." They are less easily overwhelmed by the deadly miasmas which hang over the desolate places where, for safety's sake, they are compelled to pitch their tents.[1] Still thousands

[1] In an exceedingly interesting letter from the New York correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, dated May 24th, I found the following valuable statistics on the subject of epidemics in Cuba:—

"The dread of yellow fever might reasonably have discouraged the enlistment of volunteers, who could foresee that they would be needed in Cuba during the rainy season, but the offers and applications show that the Government could take into the service to-morrow 500,000 men, instead of the 125,000 already called, if it should consent to accept them. The mortality reports of the Spanish army are appalling, but yellow fever has not been the most deadly of the diseases with which the Spanish soldiers have contended. The number of deaths in the military hospitals on the island last year was 32,534, and of the 30,000 sick men sent back to Spain at least 10 per cent. must have died, for many of them were beyond cure. The reported deaths were distributed as follows, in round numbers: Typhoid fever and dysentery, 14,500; malarial fever, 7000; yellow fever, 6000; other diseases, 5000. And 2583 persons died of small-pox in Havana. But the resident inspector of our Marine Hospital Bureau (which is a kind of National Board of Health) reports that only one of the five large military hospitals in Havana is in good sanitary condition; the others are little better than pest-houses, and one of them is characterised by the inspector as 'the filthiest building in the city.' The Spanish soldiers have been sacrificed to the greed and corruption of their commanders and the prevailing mediæval ignorance of sanitation.

In the recent official indictments of Spanish misrule in Cuba, scarcely anything has been said about the perpetual menace of yellow fever infection to which this country has been subjected, and to the enormous actual cost in the United States of fever epidemics, the seeds of which were introduced from the island. Of late years all our yellow fever epidemics have come from Cuba, and the infection has entered our Southern States in spite of the most elaborate precautions and defences. Many years ago the disease was sometimes brought from Vera Cruz; but Mexico, under the effective and progressive rule of Diaz, has cleansed her infected ports, and they are no longer to be feared. An epidemic of this fever on our southern seaboard, even if it be of short duration and attended by slight mortality, causes very great alarm—because the ravages of memorable visitations are

of them do perish, for though the *vomito nigro* does not attack the blacks, it carries off thousands of whites and coolies, while other loathsome diseases decimate the uncleanly negroes and their coolie brethren.

The wildest imagination can scarcely conceive a more wonderful scene than that presented by an encampment of Cuban rebels in one of the virgin forests which still cover a considerable portion of the island, or else on those level marsh lands, called Manigua, which bear so strong a resemblance to the Roman Campagna.

Only those who have been in a tropical forest can form any idea of what it is like. I remember once being taken by two excellent guides a few hundred yards into one of these jungles. An English forest generally consists of one, or, at the most, four or five varieties of tree—the oak, the pine, the ash, the birch, the beech—with an undergrowth of wild nuts and bramble, and a still lower one of bracken fern and grass. In a tropical forest almost every tree and shrub is wholly different from its neighbour.

The first impression made upon me, as I sauntered into this green maze, was one of absolute amazement, not unmingled with a certain sense of terror. The vegetation around me was of such unusual proportions that I felt myself a mere pigmy, a sort of Jack the Giant-Killer wandering in quest of the Ogre's Castle.

recalled by the people—and paralyses commerce and industry throughout a wide area. The actual cost of such an epidemic may be 100,000,000 dols. The epidemic of last year entailed a loss of a third or a half of that sum. No relief can be expected so long as the island shall suffer under Spanish misrule. But now we may look forward with confidence to the time, not far distant, when this nuisance shall be abated."

And indeed the thick growth of tree trunk and palm stems, absolutely leafless for some forty or fifty feet, might easily be mistaken for the dead walls of some enchanted fortress. Looking up, however, one beheld, instead of blue sky, an aerial canopy of the densest foliage, varying in tint from the deepest to the tenderest green.

These Cuban forests are pathless: to traverse them you must cut or burn your way; their labyrinths remind you at every turn of the opening lines to Dante's *Inferno*:

> "Nel mezzo de cammin di nostra vita
> Mi ritrovai per una selva, oscura
> Chè la diritta via era smarrita."

As you pass along, clouds of winged creatures rise out of the grass, some of them infamously unkind and pernicious, others beautiful and harmless. In the openings the most inconceivably lovely flowers bloom, and humming birds flash hither and thither, sparkling like variegated jewels in the few rays of sunshine that penetrate the massive canopy of leaves.

Now and again their passage is barred by the rope-like branches of some uncanny creeper, that come pouring down from above like the tangled rigging of a wrecked ship. You draw back in alarm, lest the strange thing should suddenly come to life, and turn into a chain of angry serpents. To your surprise you perceive one side of it to be literally blazing with flame-coloured orchids, red and orange. In the centre of yonder little open space is a dead tree that some huge parasite has seized upon, dragged out of earth and imprisoned in a woody cage, every bar of which is tapestried with

the most exquisite orchids. Yonder growth, which reaches far above your knees, consists of the great wheel-shaped maiden-hair fern, whose fronds are so exquisite and so brittle that you feel remorse at trampling so tender and delicate a carpet under foot. Presently you find yourself ascending a rocky eminence, crowned by half a dozen soaring cabbage palms, and thence you plunge into a shrubbery where the exquisite Tabernæmontana, or the resplendent Calycophyllum, fills the hot moist air with an overpowering perfume, recalling that of our homely syringa. On and on you go, through groves of palm trees, tied together by entwined lianas, looking, for all the world, like motionless boa constrictors, and on which countless tiny lizards, or harmless little snakes, glisten in the sunlight. Now and then a flying squirrel flashes past, or a monster bat is disturbed, or you form the acquaintance of an ugly old iguana, who winks at you with a knowing eye, and withdraws, as suddenly as he appeared, behind a trap door of broad glossy leaves. Here are clusters of begonias, there a veritable cataract of morning glory, the deep blue flowers so thickly set together that not a green leaf is to be seen, for many yards. When you least expect it, the wooden walls open, and discover a glimpse of some placid lake, embedded like a jewel in a frame of dark green orange trees laden with golden fruit, and covered with every sort of water lily, varying from the most dazzling white to the deepest crimson and violet. The heat is so great that you feel an irresistible impulse to throw off your clothes and jump into the pellucid water; but your guide, divining

your intention, soon makes you alter your mind, assuring you that the bed of the lakelet swarms with uncanny aquatic snakes, while perchance that unpleasant individual, the ugly caiman, lurks in the dark, under yon mass of arum lilies, ready to pounce upon you, and snap off your leg. Yonder is a turtle scudding along, and round the shores of an islet, covered with delicate bamboo cane, sails a whole fleet of gorgeous water fowl. The impulse to push forward and discover new wonders and beauties for yourself is swiftly checked by your guide, who warns you that, as the sun begins to drop, noxious vapours presently will rise,—vapours charged with deadly fevers and incurable agues. And so you hurry back, thanking heaven, all the time, that you have a guide with you, for without his friendly aid you might wander round and round in this maze of luxuriant vegetation, never straying far from the point whence you started, and sink at last, exhausted, to die of hunger and thirst, with, it may be, a cluster of tempting poison peaches dripping luscious but death-dealing syrup just above your parched lips. In forests such as these, stretching for leagues across the island, do the Cuban rebels pitch their camps.

Through these wild forsaken regions there are neither roads nor paths, and the enemy has concealed the trace of his footsteps with the utmost precaution. Every bush may mask an ambuscade, and behind every rock some danger lurks. Sometimes the Spaniards —to whom experience has taught many things—may mark the exact position of the rebels by the whirl of the vultures, circling high above it, watching the time

when, after the camp has broken up, they may make a descent upon the scanty fragments of victuals left behind, or upon the dead bodies of those who have perished of wounds, of starvation, perchance, or of some malignant fever. Overhead is a brazen black-blue sky, through which the sun darts red-hot rays, or else a black stretch of dense clouds, belching cataracts of water from week's end to week's end, and frequently torn by the most terrific storms of thunder and lightning. The marvel of it is that so many men, and even women, are able to live at all, under such dreadful conditions, more often than not lacking the veriest necessaries of life, and depending for their daily food on their knowledge of the qualities, poisonous or harmless, of the various fruits, berries, and herbs they find about their path. I wonder if it ever occurs to people who talk so glibly of Cuban affairs, over their well-spread tables, that at this very moment there are considerably over a hundred thousand human beings encamped, under these appalling conditions, in various districts of Cuba, not to mention the miserable *reconcentrados*, or men out of employment, whom the townspeople reject, whom the rebel army is not allowed to absorb into its ranks, and who, between the two camps, have been systematically starved to death, especially under the merciless and cruel rule of General Weyler.

In the dry season matters are a trifle better, the fevers diminish, and it is possible to sleep in the open air without serious risk. The insects, too, are a trifle less vicious, and the brilliant moonlit winter's nights are often pleasant enough. Then the bivouac becomes

endurable, and if the enemy is sufficiently distant, a certain element of gaiety lends a picturesque, even romantic, character to the barbaric gathering. The negroes twang their banjos, blow their horns, and dance in rings, and the white adventurers gather round the camp fires, to tell old-world stories, or dream, perchance, of their childhood, spent under more temperate skies,—and in their heart of hearts, as their recollection slips back to home, to regret they ever embarked on such pitiful adventures as these. Suddenly the alert is called, the trumpet blows, an order is hoarsely shouted, and the motley crowd moves on elsewhere, or is commanded to make a descent on some plantation to demand provisions, and, may be, if the owner does not comply, to fire his sugar canes. Not unfrequently, to screen their flight, they set light to the prairie or to the forest, and the grass and the trees burn on for days and nights on end. Some of these bands have a chaplain with them—a priest of the sort called in England, before the Reformation, a "hedge-priest"—who, on Sundays and feast days, celebrates Mass at an improvised altar, in some forest glade. But, on the other hand, the negroes, of whom there are thousands, seem, as a result of the free life they lead, to have reverted, in most cases, by a species of atavism, to their old savage habits.

I have said elsewhere that in the olden days their Cuban masters only gave them a veneer of Christianity; they soon relapse into the obscene and bloody creed of Voudism, the traditions of which they have never lost. And in almost every rebel camp there are a number of

coolies who, although—to please the Cubans—they prostrate themselves before the images of Neustra Senora de Cobre, and of Our Lady of Guadalupe, secretly practise the lowest forms of Buddhism.

It is now time to turn our attention to an extremely interesting personage, who, in his day, has given the mother country more trouble, probably, than any other of the numerous leaders of the rebellion—the famous Maceo. He was a true son of the revolution, born at Santiago di Cuba in that great year of universal revolt, 1848. He was not, as has been so frequently stated in English newspapers, a gentleman of noble family. As a matter of fact, he began life as a muleteer. Hence his wonderful knowledge of the Cuban ravines and passes, which has been so precious both to his followers and to himself. He never made any pretence of being a "Caballero," but gave himself out for what he was, a blunt man of the people (egregiously vain, let me add, and astonishingly ignorant!). Four years ago the following description of Maceo was written me from Cuba by a friend who knew him well. "This wonderful man, though short of stature, looks the very incarnation of a Spadassin of the good old times of Calderon and Lope, and this notwithstanding his strong evidences of negro blood. True, his features are none too regular, but his complexion is, to say the best of it, swarthy. His eyes are splendid, and he has formidable moustachios, which would have roused the envy of a musketeer. He is scrupulously neat in his dress, and wears his much belaced gold uniform with a gallant air. His broad-brimmed white felt hat sets

off his face to advantage. On the whole, he at first impressed me very favourably. Suddenly, however, something annoyed him, and he turned round on one of his men, and burst into a storm of oaths. Then he showed his white teeth, shook with nervous fury, and looked very fierce." For a good many years, Maceo was the hero of the day. Even in the towns, where interest in the rising is apt to flag, people liked to talk of his adventures. He bore the marks of twenty-five wounds,—twenty caused by bullets, and five by sword thrusts. He possessed a quality of ubiquity which at times seemed almost miraculous. When the Spaniards were perfectly certain that Maceo and his men were in the west, they were tolerably certain to turn up in the east. A dozen times, at least, he was reported killed, but sooner or later he always reappeared, and in a condition altogether too lively for Spanish taste. Some persons even now believe he was not shot, as reported, on December 9th, 1895. But there can be but little doubt his adventurous career is ended, otherwise he would have certainly reappeared ere this, especially as he is sorely needed, no one having as yet risen up to take his place. General Gomez and Maceo have been by far the most interesting figures in the Cuban rebellion. In the time to come he will, I feel sure, be the hero of a score of novels, as startling and sensational as any of those of Mayne Reid or Fenimore Cooper.

Far be it from me to disparage the motives of the men who have conducted this revolt against a distinctly vicious and obsolete government. The saddest fact

connected with the present struggle is that Spain's punishment has come upon her at a time when she least deserves it, for during the last ten years, though all too late, a great deal has been done for the island by the mother country. In the first place, it is not true that Cubans are not admitted to any official position in the administration of their country. At this present time at least one-half of the Government employés, high and low, are Cubans. There are some scores of Cuban officers in the Spanish army. Cuba is represented at the Cortes by thirteen Senators, and thirty Deputies. The University of Havana is almost entirely in the hands of Cubans; the Rector, Don Joaquim F. Lastres, and the Vice-Rector, are both of them natives of the island. All the Deans are Cubans, and out of eighty Professors, sixty are Spaniards born in the island, *ergo* Cubans. All the Advocates of the Supreme Court are Cubans, many belonging to families which have resided for generations in the island. Still there is widespread and well-founded discontent. The island is not properly administered. Everything is in a state of confusion. Red-tapeism—the curse of Spanish bureaucracy—is rampant, and the system of petty backsheesh is almost as universal as in Turkey.

There is much truth, too, in Mr Gossip's statement in his article in the May number of the *Fortnightly Review*, entitled "The Mournful Case of Cuba," which runs as follows:—

"Spain has placed an almost insuperable barrier in the way of American merchants, should they attempt to enter her ports with

American products, in the form of a protective tariff, which resembles in many respects, the policy once pursued by England against her American colonies, of which the 'Boston tea party' was the direct result, has proved very detrimental to American interests. For while the United States purchases, at least, more than seventy per cent. of everything Cuba has to sell, Cuba in return buys from the United States less than twenty per cent. of the articles she imports —chiefly flour, petroleum, and other non-competitive articles, which Spain is unable to furnish; so that it is to the land of the Stars and Stripes that Cuba must look, since, as long as beets are grown in Europe, the product of the sugar cane will find no market on the European side of the Atlantic. Thus, the mother country pockets annually, through her antiquated institutions, the Yankee millions, which, under proper conditions of trade, would be returned to the people of the United States in payment for American coal, iron, and manufactured goods, which are often sent to Spain and then re-shipped to Cuba, as the only practical method of getting into the latter country. Owing to the backwardness of Spanish industries, and the inability of Spain to supply Cuba with the products she requires, the Cubans have to consume Spanish articles of inferior quality, or pay exorbitant prices for foreign goods, owing to the prohibitive duties imposed, which merely place large sums in the Spanish exchequer. Spanish merchants practise a novel fraud by nationalising foreign products for importation into Cuba, and thus the senseless commercial policy of Spain is the cause of inextinguishable discontent.

"It is true, also, that Cuba is within the economic orbit of the United States, and that the commerce of the island is a strong factor in the Cuban problem, inasmuch as it is the active agent of civilization everywhere; and sugar is omnipotent from the purely commercial American point of view. There are certain fixed economic laws, which are as sure in their operation as gravitation, and must inevitably affect the ultimate destiny of Cuba."

I do not think sufficient attention has been paid by students of the Cuban question to facts wholly unconnected with bad government and of a purely

economic nature. First and foremost of these is the depreciation in the commercial value of local produce, especially the loss on sugar, which is mainly due to the popularity and cheapness of beetroot sugar on the continent of Europe. Without undue entering into details, I would point out that Cuba is in this respect going through precisely the same financial and commercial crisis as the other and better-governed West Indian Islands. The tobacco trade, I hear, is less flourishing than it used to be. It has to contend with the prodigious development which has recently taken place in the tobacco markets of Asia Minor, Egypt, Europe, and the United States. In a word, Cuba has been doing very badly now for over twenty years, and families which were not very long ago amongst the richest of our period, are now paupers, eager to sell their few remaining jewels, bric-à-brac, and even their fans, lace, and brocades, to the passing stranger. To add to the general distress came the completion of the abolition of slavery, with its usual result—the negroes refused to work. Coolies were imported, but the climate did not suit them. White labour has not been tried, for the simple reason that it is a foredoomed failure. Masters who have had to deal with negroes all their lives are never able to manage poor whites. Hundreds of plantations have gone out of cultivation, and thousands of half savage, coloured folk, have gone to swell in the all-pervading anarchy which the Spanish Government is not strong enough to suppress.

Meanwhile the rebellion has absorbed an incredible

amount of Spanish capital, and drained the mother country of hundreds of thousands of young men, the great majority of whom will never see their homes again. Cuba, in her present condition, is Spain's ruin, and it would have been well for the Spaniards if they had sold the island half a century ago.

"Cuba," said a Spanish writer the other day, "is a sort of bottomless waste-paper basket. The women of Cadiz and its neighbourhood hold the very name of Cuba in execration, they have seen so many of their sons and sweethearts depart thither, never to return."

I am not one of those who see an angel in every Cuban rebel, and a devil in every Spaniard; I hold that in this, as in almost every other human concern, the case, to put it vulgarly, is "six to the one, and half a dozen to the other." There are grave faults, nay, crimes, on both sides, and the condition of the island in the present half of the century, and especially during the last five years, is a disgrace to civilization. When individual Spaniards have tried to do their best for the Cubans, their good intentions have not received much response from their superiors. Take, for instance, Martinez Campos, who was sent out to the island some years back as Commander-in-Chief; he was an honourable and humane man, desirous of doing the best he could to reduce bitterness and evolve peace. But his efforts were frequently baulked by the home Government, which was for ever pressing him to take active measures. He knew the island, having been there twenty years before, and under exceptional circumstances, but he was powerless to plant the olive branch

he had brought with him from Spain, whence he had started amidst the most enthusiastic expectations, and to which he returned, not unlike the proverbial rocket that went up in a blaze of glory, to fall a flat, burnt stick. I cannot forbear thinking that the gravest mistake of the Spanish Government in the whole of this Cuban business was its peremptory recall of Martinez Campos, and, above all, the despatch of such a man as General Weyler, with the strictest orders to put the rebellion down at any cost.

Weyler, Marquis of Tenerife, is an extraordinary individual. He has been charged with appalling cruelty, and although, in a recent interview in the *Daily Telegraph*, he is described as bringing forward some justification for certain of his acts, still the fact remains, that since the dreadful days of Alva, the horrors he has perpetrated in Cuba have rarely been equalled in human history. Indeed, with his Belgian descent, he seems to have inherited something of the unrelenting nature of those cruel bigots who transformed the Sablon Square in Brussels into a sort of permanent furnace, for the roasting of human beings. He might be Caesar Borgia come to life again, in a modern Spanish uniform. He conceived it his duty to extinguish the civil war at any cost, and he used the self-same methods which made the fame (or shame) of Hernando Cortez and of Alva. I have waded through a mass of evidence against him, and must confess, even allowing for considerable exaggeration, that he stands out in unpleasant relief against an ugly background of massacre and starvation. His desperate struggle to

stamp out the revolt seems to have driven him to frenzy, and the rebels were roused, on their side, to reprisals of an equally shocking character. But the rebellion was not to be quelled even by General Weyler's bloody methods. Like some gaunt skeleton, it rose up again, in its marshes and its forests, and defied him. The wretched *reconcentrados* were starved to death, or shot down by scores, but the undaunted resistance still waved its scarlet and white striped banner, with the solitary "star of hope" glittering in its corner. At last, and none too soon, in response to the indignant outcries of Europe and America, Weyler was recalled. Meanwhile the New York Junta availed itself of the excitement produced by the harrowing stories of Weyler's inhuman methods, to work up the easily excited Americans to the very verge of hysteria.

An incident occurred in Havana some little while back, which, although trivial enough when reduced to its true proportions, has had a vast influence in bringing about the present war. Miss Evangelina Cisneros, a daughter of that Marquis de Santa Lucia who was second President of the Cuban Republic, effected her escape from a Cuban prison under exceptional circumstances. We are assured that she is exceedingly lovely, and, judging by her numerous photographs, she certainly must be very pretty. Her aged father has been in a State prison at Havana for some years. His dutiful daughter, hearing that his health was breaking down under the prolonged confinement, went one day to the governor of the prison,

Colonel Berriz, and throwing herself upon her knees before him, implored him to use his influence to obtain her parent's liberation. If we are to believe Miss Evangelina Cisneros' account of the affair, the colonel offered her the same vile conditions that the Count de Luna suggests to Leonora (in *Il Trovatore*), when that operatic heroine begs him to release Manrico. The fair Evangelina scorned the proposal, and, in a whirlwind of indignation, fled from her insulter's presence. According to the Colonel, there is not a word of truth in the whole story; he vows he is the victim of an hysterical girl, who had been caught carrying letters to the rebel army. Be this as it may, Señorita Cisneros was arrested and sent to prison, and to what seems to have been a very undesirable one, in which she was given scanty fare, and forced to associate with the very lowest females. Here she remained for many months, in the greatest agony of mind, until she managed, one fine day, to communicate with Mrs Lee, the wife of the United States Consul, by means of a few words scratched on a bit of paper with a pin, dipped in her own blood. Mrs Lee contrived to visit her, and does not seem, to tell the truth, to have had much difficulty in obtaining admission to her cell. The sad story was soon afterwards published broadcast all over the United States and England, thanks mainly to the arch-millionaire journalist, Mr W. E. Hearst, who, perceiving that Evangelina's adventures would make excellent copy for his paper, and considerably help the Cuban cause, commissioned Mr Deckar, a young gentleman connected with his staff, to go to Cuba and effect her

release, which exploit was duly performed with splendid courage and skill. The fair Evangelina was enabled, thanks to Mr Deckar's intervention, to stupefy her companions with sweetmeats infused with laudanum, and, whilst they lay in a profound slumber, to squeeze herself through the bars of her cell window, to cross a ladder stretched from roof to roof, and finally, after many hairbreadth perils and dangers, to effect her escape from Cuba like another Rosalind, in the disguise of a boy—all of which tends to prove that the Cuban prisons are not particularly well guarded.

Meanwhile, a petition to the Queen of Spain, signed by hundreds of American ladies, headed by the President's mother, was sent from New York to Madrid, and yet another to the same purpose was forwarded from London, where two ladies, famed for their instinctive horror of anything approaching self-advertisement—Mrs Ormiston Chant and the fair author of *The Sorrows of Satan*—warmly espoused the fate of the hapless Evangelina, whose adventures, in spite of a monster reception in Madison Square, attended by not less than 250,000 persons, with appropriate banners, flowers, and bands of music, fell rather flat in New York. Her gallant rescuer being a married man, Evangelina remains to this day in "maiden meditation, fancy free."

But the sensation produced by this interesting case was immense. Portraits of Mlle. Cisneros were sold by the thousand, and from New York to San Francisco execration of the Spaniards rose to fever heat.

Soon afterwards occurred the terrible "Maine" disaster, which, coming on the top of the Cisneros business, drove the American masses, egged on by the clamours of the "yellow press," to force the reluctant President into a strangely sudden declaration of war,—a struggle, the fate of which, even as I write, yet hangs in the balance.

P.S.—Even as these pages go to press, a telegram announces the marriage of "Miss Evangelina Cisneros to one of her rescuers."

HAVANA.

CHAPTER VI.

Havana and the Havanese.[1]

Notwithstanding the mosquito nuisance and indifferent drainage, the traveller's first impression of Havana is distinctly agreeable, and the pleasing illusion is never completely destroyed. The harbour is wonderfully picturesque. Opposite the entrance stands the Morro Castle, built by Philip II. of Spain in 1573. It was formerly almost a *facsimile* of that curious little castellated Moorish fortress which faces the beautiful Monastery and Church of Belem, at Lisbon, but has been considerably altered of late years in the process of adaptation to uses of modern warfare. Then comes in view the other historical fortress, La Punta, also erected by our Queen Mary's sinister consort. To the left are two rather sharp promontories, crested by several fine churches, one "Los Angeles," fully two hundred years old — an age in the New World corresponding to hoar antiquity in the Old. Beyond these, upon a number

[1] According to the best authorities, Diego Valasquez, the Conqueror of Cuba, founded the famous city of San Christobal de la Habana in 1519, and being immensely impressed by the width and depth of the harbour, and its generally favourable position for trade purposes, he called it *la llave del Nuevo Mondo*, the key to the New World.

of low-lying hills, rises the city, an irregular mass of one-storied dwellings, painted a vivid ochre, and interspersed with church domes and towers, with here and there tall, lank cocoa palms, or a tuff of banana leaves waving over some garden wall. Vessels from every part of the world, feluccas, with their swallow-shaped sails, some dazzling white, others a deep-red brown, fill up the foreground—whilst canoe-like market boats, laden with tropical fruits, fish, vegetables, and flowers, and rowed by negroes naked to the waist, scud in all directions over the deep-blue waters.

Arriving, as I did, from New York, which I had left deep in snow, this summer scene was most exhilarating, and the exceeding transparency of the Cuban atmosphere added considerably to its beauty. Everything seemed unusual, novel, and, above all, utterly unlike what I expected. The impress of the mother-country, Spain, is felt and seen everywhere, and modern American influences are barely perceptible as yet. From the sea, Havana might be Malaga or Cadiz, but when you land, memories of Pompeii immediately crowd upon you. What we should call the city proper, the commercial quarter of the Cuban capital, consists of a labyrinth of narrow lanes, traversed by one or two broadish streets, the two principal of which are known all over Southern America and the West Indies as Calle O'Reilly and Calle O'Bisbo, and run from the Governor's Palace right out to the walls of the city. Few of the houses which line these lanes and alleys are

more than one storey high, but that one storey is so exceedingly lofty that it would make three in an average London dwelling. The lower half of every house is painted either a deep darkish blue, a deep Egyptian red, or a vivid yellow ochre; the upper part is always a dazzling white. As in Pompeii, you notice rows of stucco columns, painted half one colour half another. Peeping through the ever-open doorways you may, as you pass along, obtain something more than a mere casual glimpse of the interior of the dwellings. If you are early enough, you may behold the family at its toilet, for there is very little privacy anywhere in Cuba, every act, from entry into life to its final exit, from baptism to burial, being serenely performed in the utmost publicity. The lower windows, overlooking the street, are protected by heavy iron bars, and behind these you may, in certain quarters of the town, see lively groups of Havanese Geishas, their faces thickly powdered with rice flour, their long black hair plaited, and their opulent charms displayed to liberal advantage—"sono donne che fano all'amore!"

The frequent curious overhanging windows, with their iron bars, would give the place a prison-like appearance, were they not painted in the most brilliant colours — orange, scarlet, and pea-green. More frequently than not, the fragrance of the family dinner falls pleasantly on your olfactory nerve, and you may even catch a glimpse of the cook, a negress, invariably presiding over the charcoal stove in the kitchen, turban on head, a long calico skirt

streaming behind her, and in her mouth the inevitable cigarette, without which no Cuban coloured lady can be happy.

There is no West End, so to speak, in Havana, the mansions of the wealthy being scattered through every part of the city. Some of the better sort of houses are exceedingly handsome, but they are all built on one plan, in the classical style, with an inner courtyard, surrounded by handsome marble or stucco columns. I imagine them to be designed much on the same plan as the villas of ancient Rome. You first look into a fine hall—generally either built of white marble or else stuccoed to look like it. Here the family Victoria or old-fashioned Volante is usually stowed away. Here also stands, rather for ornament than use, a sedan-chair, which is, more often than not, richly painted and gilded. Beyond this hall is the Pateo, in the centre of which there is usually a garden rich in tropical vegetation, shading either a fountain or a large gilded aviary full of brilliant parrots and parrakeets. In some houses there is a picture or statue of the Virgin, or some Saint, with a lamp burning before it day and night. In the Pateo, the family assembles of an evening, the ladies in full dress; and as it is generally brilliantly illuminated, the pleasant domestic scene adds greatly to the gay appearance of the streets, which fill with loungers in the cool of the evening.

The Havanese shops are plentifully supplied with European and native goods, but, as in almost all tropical countries, very few of them have windows, and the wares are exposed in the open, as in an Eastern

bazaar. Only a few years ago the jewellers' and goldsmiths' shops were renowned throughout the Western world, but now, unfortunately, they are entirely ruined. Even in 1878, when the shoe first began to pinch in Cuba, many fine jewels, and some beautiful specimens of old Spanish silver, Louis XV. fans, snuff-boxes, and bric-a-brac of all kinds, were offered for sale. Often a negress would come to the hotel bearing a coffer full of things for inspection ; the mistress who sent the good woman must have had implicit trust in her servant, for she frequently sold her wares for very considerable sums. Few of the Havanese magnates and rich planters have anything worth selling left them nowadays, but only a few years ago Havana was a happy hunting-ground for bargain seekers.

The handsomest street in Havana is the Cerro, a long thoroughfare running up a hill at the back of the town, bordered on either side by enormous old villas, in the midst of magnificent gardens. The finest of these mansions belongs to the very old Hernandez family, and is built of white marble in the usual classical style. The adjacent villa, Santoveneo, has a lovely garden, and used to be famous for its collection of orchids, the late Countess de Santoveneo, a very wealthy lady, being a great collector. She was a clever, agreeable woman, well known in Paris, where she usually spent the summer and autumn. In the midst of a perfect forest of cocoa palms stands the former summer villa of the Bishops of Havana, now a private residence.

Then, one after the other, follow the handsome dwell-

ings of the Havanese aristocracy—of the Marquese dos Hermanos, of the Duque de Fernandina, of the Conde Penalver, of the Marqueza d'Aldama, etc. The cacti in these villa gardens are of amazing size and shape, some showing leaves thick and strong enough to bear the weight of a full-grown man. In the gardens of the Conde de Penalver there is a glorious mangoe grass, the first I ever saw, and the finest. Unfortunately, these Havana Edens are infested all the year round by swarms of mosquitos. The residents seem skin-proof, and do not appear to suffer from the insects' attacks. But woe waits on the unwary new-comer who tempts fate by lingering in these lovely gardens!

There are several delightful public promenades in the city and its suburbs, the Paseo de Isabel for instance, with its wide pavement and its stately central avenue of flowering trees. Here stands an exceedingly imposing monument, the Fontana de India, which would put our all too notorious "shaving-brushes" in Trafalgar Square to shame. On the summit of a snow-white marble pedestal is a fine statue of the Antilles, represented by an Indian maiden airily attired in robes of nihil, and adorned with beads and a head-dress of plumes. Cornucopias full of tropical fruits and flowers rest at her feet, and four monstrous dolphins cast down volumes of foaming water into a spacious marble basin. Forming a background to this remarkable work of art are the public gardens of La Glorietta, with their oleander groves and towering palm trees. In the great pond the Victoria Regia floats its colossal

silver cups. Hard by is the Campo de Marte, or Mars' field, where the soldiers drill, and beyond which stands the splendid palace of the Aldama family, in the midst of a glorious tropical garden.

The Calzada de la Reina is another wide street, running from the Campo de Marte, to the Calzada Belancion and the Paseo de Tacon. This is the fashionable shopping street, and, as a rule, crowded with carriages in the early morning hours, when the Cuban ladies make their purchases. No Havanese lady ever condescends to leave her victoria to enter a shop—the shopman invariably brings out his wares for her inspection, and the bargaining takes place in the open street, and is often very animated and amusing.

The Paseo de Tacon is, however, by far the finest promenade in the city, and quite worthy of any capital in the world. A very broad drive passes between a double row of splendid acacias of the "peacock" variety—so called on account of their huge tufts of crimson and yellow flowers. The Paseo dates back to 1802, and is adorned by several handsome statues and memorial columns. Of an evening it blazes with electric light, and, moreover, boasts an interminable switchback railway, a great source of amusement to the young fry of Havana. At the extreme end of Tacon, which, by the way, is sometimes as animated with carriages and pedestrians as the Champs Elyseés, are the Botanical Gardens, which are surprisingly fine. Imagine all the conservatories of Kew and the Crystal Palace without their glass roofs, and you may then

form a vague notion of the glories of these gardens. There is an avenue of cocoa palms here which is of almost unearthly beauty. I remember seeing these Gardens illuminated for a *fiesta* with myriads of coloured lights, and surpassing in fairylike beauty any transformation scene ever devised at dear old Drury. The stems of the palm trees, "all set in a stately row," seemed converted into pillars of gold, and, far above, a good hundred feet and more, scintillated clusters of tiny lamps, like jewels among their waving fronds.

Of an early winter morning—a winter morning in Cuba is like an ideal one in late May in our latitudes, Tacon Gardens are delightful, they are so well arranged and so full of interest. In the centre is the Quinta, or summer-house, which you reach by a very long verdant tunnel, formed of Pacific roses and the clustering yellow banksia. Here also I first made the acquaintance of the duck plant, or *Aristolochia pelicana* of which more anon, and of the divinely beautiful Cuban morning glory, *convolvulus major*—with its immense bunches of the deepest blue flowers. In the evening the moon-flower opens its colossal white disks, and the night-blooming cerus is also a perennial attraction to those who have never seen it burst into glory at a given hour, and shed around an almost too powerful odour of attar of roses.

Take Havana for all in all, in times of peace it is by far and away the pleasantest city in the Southern Hemisphere—the most resourceful, for it has capital public libraries, museums, clubs, and theatres. Of an evening it is quite charming. Then the streets

are thronged with people until early morning. The bands play selections from the latest operas—even Wagnerian airs—the señoras and señoritas parade up and down with their attendant cabaleros, and mostly in evening, nay, full ball dress, with only a lace veil over their heads. A brilliant double line of equipages fills the central drive, and very smart many of them are—as well turned out as any in Hyde Park or the Bois. The cafés, and there are hundreds of them, are dazzling with electric and incandescent light, and packed by a motley crowd as picturesque as it is animated. Negresses, in gaudy cast-off finery, offer you *dulce* or sweetmeats, and coloured boys cry "limonata" and ice water. Everybody has a cigarette between their lips or their fingers. Banjos twang and mandolines tinkle in all directions, and if you chance to get a good seat at the Café Dominico, or the Louvre, where the world of fashion is wont to assemble to suck ice drinks through long straws, smoke cigarettes, and criticise their neighbours, you can pass many an amused hour, watching the passing show of this West Indian Vanity Fair.

If it please you to leave the gay throng to its devices, its cigarettes, and its scandal, to quit the flaring thoroughfares and betake yourself to the semi-deserted bye streets, you will find plenty to attract and amuse you. Here, for instance, is a street so narrow, you might shake hands across it. The mellow tropical moonlight falls only on the roofs of its tall one-storied houses, and on the tapering campanile of some church or convent, which it transforms for

the time being into a column of burnished gold. A vivid glare across the street attracts your attention. It proceeds from a cavernous-looking tavern, whose otherwise gloomy interior is lighted up by strings of Chinese lanterns. A crowd of negroes, smoking cigars or cigarettes, stand in a confused group round a couple, consisting of a huge Congo black naked to the waist, and a lady of a few shades lighter hue, dancing the obscene Cubana, to the intense gratification of the dusky spectators. Down another still narrower street, across a little Plaza, and we find ourselves in a sort of covered gallery, where whole families of respectable citizens, gran'pa and gran'ma included, are supping *al fresco*—by the light of a number of curious brass lamps, such as the old Romans used. Not far off you catch a glimpse of the sea glistening in the moonlight, which turns the distant suburb of Regla, on the opposite side of the harbour, into rows of ivory dice, the square one-storied houses looking for all the world like those pernicious toys on a colossal scale. Resisting the pressing invitation of a party of gaudily dressed ladies seated in the huge cage-like window of a house hard by, we find ourselves, by a sudden turn, in the Cathedral Square. Although late, the great church is open and brilliantly illuminated, and within we can see the pious throng, kneeling before the high altar, chanting Ave Maria—

Ora pro nobis, nunc et in ora mortis nostris.

Commend to me a city of the Latin race for delightful contrasts, and I assure you Havana is no exception to the rule.

The picturesque *volante*, once as essentially Cuban as the gondola is Venetian, has entirely disappeared, at all events from the streets of the capital. It is, or perhaps I should say it was, a very singular-looking vehicle, with its wonderful spider-web-like wheels, its long shafts, and its horse or mule, upon whose back the driver should perch in a clumsily-made saddle. It had something of the litter on wheels, and was usually occupied of an afternoon on Sundays and holidays, by two or three ladies, magnificently dressed in full ball costume, and blazing with jewels, the fairest of the trio sitting on the knees of the other two. The *volante* was sometimes splendidly decorated with costly silver platings and rich stuffs. The negro driver wore a very smart dark blue and red cloth livery, covered with gold lace, high jack-boots coming almost up to his waist, and carried a long silver-mounted whip in his hand; victorias and landaus have usurped the place of these old-world coaches, excepting in the country, where they are often to be met with on the high roads.

For its size (the population is about 230,000) Havana is exceptionally well supplied with public and private carriages. You can hire an excellent *victoria de plaza* for 1 fr. 50 the hour, and a custom, which the London County Council might imitate and introduce with advantage, has long been in use in the Cuban capital. To avoid extortion from the cab-drivers, the lamp-posts are painted various colours, red for the central district, blue for the second circle, and green for the outer. Thus, in a trice, the fare be-

comes aware when he gets beyond the radius, and pays accordingly. Trouble with the Havanese hack coachman, usually a coloured man, and very civil, is of the rarest occurrence.

Although an eminently Catholic city, Havana cannot be said to be rich in churches. A goodly number have been destroyed during the various rebellions, especially those of the middle of the century (1835), when the religious orders were suppressed. The largest church is the Merced, a fine building in the *rococo* style, with handsome marble altars and some good pictures. It is crowded on Sundays and holidays by the fashionable world of the place, the young men forming up in rows outside the church as soon as Mass is over, to gaze at the señoritas and their chaperons. The Cathedral is the chief architectural monument of interest in Havana. It was erected for the Jesuits in 1704 on the site of a much older church built in 1519, and dedicated to St Cristobal, the patron of the city. The first Bishop of Havana was an Englishman, a Franciscan named Fray José White. He occupied the See from 1522 to 1527. The old cathedral being considered too small, this church was converted into a cathedral in the present century. It is built in the usual Hispano-American style, with a big dome, and two stumpy towers on either side of the centre. Internally the effect is rather heavy, owing to the dark colour of the marbles which cover the walls, but compared with most churches in these latitudes, the edifice is in exceptionally good taste, with a remarkable absence of the

tawdry images and wonderful collections of trumpery artificial flowers and glass shades which, as a rule, disfigure South American churches. The choir would be considered handsome even in Rome, and the stalls are beautifully carved in mahogany. Almost all the columns in the church are also mahogany, highly polished, producing the effect of a deep red marble, most striking when relieved, as in this case, by gilt bronze capitals. In the choir is the tomb of Columbus. The great navigator died, as most of my readers will doubtless be aware, at Valladolid, in Spain, on Ascension Day 1506, and his body was at first deposited, after the most pompous obsequies, in the church of San Francisco, in that city.

In 1513, the remains were conveyed to the Carthusian monastery of Las Cuevas, at Seville, where King Ferdinand erected a monument over them, bearing the simple but appropriate inscription :—

"A Castile y Leon
Nuevo mundo dio Colon."

Twenty-three years later, the body of Columbus, with that of his son Diego, was removed to the island of San Domingo, or Hayti, and interred in the principal church of the capital; but when that island was ceded to the French, the Spaniards claimed the ashes of the Discoverer, and they were carried to Havana and solemnly interred in the Cathedral on the 15th January 1796. The remains, which by this time, it seems, were scanty enough, were placed in a small urn, deposited in a niche in the left wall of the

chancel, and sealed up with a marble slab, surmounted by an excellent bust of the bold explorer, wreathed with laurel. The inscription, a very poor one, excited considerable ridicule, and a pasquinade was circulated lamenting the absence of the nine Muses on the occasion of its composition.

Of late years, however, the inhabitants of San Domingo[1] have set up a protest in favour of certain bones which have been discovered in their own cathedral, and declare by their gods, or by their saints, that never a bone of Columbus left their island, and that the relics of the great Christopher in the Cathedral of Havana, unto which so many pilgrimages have been made, are as apocryphal as were those of certain saints mentioned by Erasmus.

As a matter of fact, so far as I can make out after the perusal of a number of pamphlets on the subject, only half the bones of Columbus were taken to Havana. The priests at San Domingo kept back a portion of the body and hid it in the south of the sacristy of their Cathedral, where it was discovered with many evidences of its authenticity in 1877.

Of the other numerous Havanese churches there is not much to be said, except that nearly all have remarkable ceilings, decorated in a sort of mosaic work in rare woods, often very artistic in design. Columns of mahogany are frequently seen, and nearly

[1] See on this subject the following works: (1) *Los restos de Colon*, per Don José Manuel de Echeverry, Santander, 1878; (2) *Cristofero Colombo e San Domingo*, per L. T. Belgrano, Genova, 1879; (3) *Los Restos de Cristobal Colon*, by Tejera, Santo Domingo, 1879; (4) *Los restos de Colon*, Emiliano Tejera, Madrid, 1878.

all the churches are lined with very old Spanish or Dutch tiles. The Church of Santa Clara, attached to a very large nunnery, is a favourite place of devotion with the fashionable ladies, who squat on a piece of carpet in front of the Madonna, with their negro attendant kneeling a few feet behind them. When the lady has performed her devotions, the sable footman takes up her carpet, and follows her out of the church, walking solemnly a few feet behind her. In the Church of the Merced there is a very curious picture representing a group of Indians being slaughtered by a number of Spaniards. In the centre is a wooden cross, upon the transverse portions of which Our Lady is seated, holding the infant Jesus in her arms. In the corner is a long inscription of some historical importance. It runs thus :—

"The Admiral, Don Christopher Columbus, and the Spanish Army, being possessed of the 'Cerro de la Vega,' a place in the Spanish island, erected on it a cross, on whose right arm, the 2nd of May, 1492, in the night there appeared with her most precious Son, the Virgin, Our Lady of Mercy. The Indians, who occupied the island, as soon as they saw Her, drew their arrows, and fired at Her, but as the arrows could not pierce the sacred wood, the Spaniards took courage, and, falling upon the said Indians, killed a great number of them. And the person who saw this wonderful prodigy was the V. R. F. Juan."

The Jesuits have an important college for boys in Havana. Annexed to it is the Observatory, said to be the best organised in South America. The church is handsome, and over the high altar hangs a famous holy family, by Ribeira. In connection with this college there is also a museum and library, especially

rich in drawings and prints, illustrating Cuban life and scenery, from the sixteenth century down to our own times.

The wooden images of saints on the altars in the Havanese churches are most picturesque, and their costumes often very quaint. St Michael, for instance, may appear in white kid dancing shoes and a short velvet frock, and the Madonna is usually attired in the cumbersome Spanish court dress of the sixteenth century ; with farthingale and ruff complete.

A remarkably fine old church is San Francisco, long since desecrated and converted into the custom-house. It has a noble tower, and stands in a conspicuous position down by the harbour. In the suppressed monastery is a vast room with a glorious cedar-wood ceiling. San Francisco is famous in the annals of Havana for a triple murder, which took place upon its altar in 1833, before the Church was converted to profane purposes, and was still one of the most popular shrines in the city. Hard by is an old-world café—the Leon de Oro—which in those days was tenanted by an Italian with a pretty wife. The worthy man got jealous of her, and, finding out that her paramour was the Secretary of the Captain-General, Don Alonzo Vales y Sandoval—watched his opportunity to avenge himself. It chanced that the noble Don was ordered to watch by the Sepulchre in this church on Holy Thursday evening. Dressed, therefore, in his scarlet robes, as a member of the Confraternity of the Sacred Blood, the unlucky gentleman was apparently absorbed in prayer before the altar, when the infuriated Italian

dealt him a blow in the back with a stiletto, which killed him there and then. Before the horrified congregation could arrest him, he murdered his wife, who was kneeling in prayer close by her lover, and then stabbed himself—all of which uncanny tragedy I found solemnly related in choice Spanish in an old Havana journal, dated June 17, 1833.

The numerous charitable institutions in the capital, and throughout the island, are well managed, and generally clean. The Casa de Beneficencia, founded by the famous Las Casas, as an asylum for the extremes of life, the very young and very old, is especially interesting. It is managed by those admirable women, the Little Sisters of the Poor. Nothing can exceed the exquisite cleanliness of the Lazar House, situated at some distance from the city, in which six nuns and two priests have banished themselves from the world in order to tend the many hapless lepers on the island.

But admirably managed, roomy, and well endowed though they undoubtedly are, the charitable establishments of Havana do not supply the demand, for the place swarms with beggars, especially in these recent hard times. Never, no, not even in Spain or Italy, have I seen such terrible beggars as those of Cuba. They haunt you everywhere, gathering round the church doors, whining for alms, insulting you if you refuse them, and pestering you as you go home at night, never leaving you till you either bestow money on them, or escape within your own or some friendly door.

Kingsley described Havana as "the Western Abomination," so low was his opinion of the moral tone of its inhabitants. Whether his judgment was right or wrong, I dare not say, but I know enough to convince me that the average Havanese drawing-room can provide quite as much ill-natured gossip as any in London. Here, as elsewhere in Southern America, religion has become a mere affair of ceremony and outward observance, with little or no moral influence. I am assured that of late years there has been a considerable reaction, and that numerous missions have been preached by priests and friars, imported from Europe in the hope of exciting the zeal of the native clergy, which has very possibly been affected by the enervating influence of the climate. Be this as it may, the churches in Cuba are a never-failing source of interest, by reason of the quaint and everchanging scenes their interiors exhibit. In some of them the music is admirable in its way, although entirely of an operatic character. At the Merced there is a full orchestra, and the principal singers from the opera may often be heard at High Mass.

Church has always, in Latin countries, been the scene of a good deal of quiet flirtation, and I remember one Sunday morning, in the Cathedral of Havana, being initiated by a friend into the mysteries of fan language. We watched an extremely good-looking and richly apparelled young lady, who, after she had said her preliminary devotions, looked round her as if seeking somebody. Presently she opened her fan very wide, which, as the Cuban who was with us at

the time assured us, meant "I see you." Then she half closed it; this indicated "Come and see me." Four fingers were next placed upon the upper half of the closed fan, signifying, "At half-past four." The fan was next dropped upon the floor, which, we were told, signified the fact that the lady would be alone. A Havanese lady, who is expert in this system of signalling, can talk by the hour with the help of her fan, and of a bunch of variously coloured flowers, each of which has some special meaning.

Amongst so pleasure-loving a people as the Cubans, public amusements hold a far more prominent place than they do in any of the United States, with, perhaps, the sole exception of New Orleans, and the carnival at Havana was at one time the most brilliant in the Americas. For many years, however, its glories have been declining, and during the last few decades the upper and middle classes have taken scant part in the festivities. I can remember, however, many years ago, seeing the famous ribbon dance performed by people of quality in the open streets. A gaily-dressed youth walked in front of the company, holding a pole, from which floated a number of coloured ribbons, which the various couples held in their hands, and threaded into a kind of plait as they moved gracefully round the leader of this *al fresco* cotillon. It was a very pretty sight to see hundreds of masqueraders parading the streets, engaged in this graceful pastime, and each band accompanied by a group of musicians. Throughout the carnival the negroes are allowed to mingle with the white population in all festivities, and even in the great

gala procession of carriages, which passes round the gaily decorated city during three successive afternoons, the negroes' donkey tandems and brilliantly draped waggons are permitted to take their places among the equipages of their masters. The negroes formerly went about the streets masked and disguised, and as they formed one-third of the population, there was no lack of variety of costume, but neither bon-bons nor flower throwing had any place in this somewhat formal pageant. The Cubans evidently do not appreciate cut blossoms, for you rarely, if ever, see a bouquet in their houses, although their gardens simply blaze with every sort of flowers.

After sunset the revel begins in earnest. The negroes come out in their thousands, carrying lighted Chinese lanterns hanging from the top of bamboo poles. They shout and leap, and at every open space they dance to the sound of tom-toms and horns, their two chief musical instruments. All the theatres have a masked ball, that of the *Tacon*,[1] which is the finest and largest theatre in the Southern Hemisphere, being exclusively devoted to the upper and middle classes. Here there is a great display of jewellery, the ladies, as in Italy, wearing the little loup mask and a domino, while most of the gentlemen are in evening dress. Of recent years, the ball at the *Tacon* has greatly diminished in gaiety and local colour. The usual

[1] The Tacon Theatre was built in 1830 by a man who made his fortune selling fish. Having saved up a large sum, he invested it in land, and built the first market upon the site, and finally, as an act of gratitude to his fellow-citizens for having assisted him in making some millions of dollars, he built them their largest theatre.

European dances fill the entire programme, and there is very little difference between this *veglione* and any in Nice, Rome, or Naples.

At the "Payrete," an immense theatre near the *Tacon*, matters are quite otherwise, and the coloured element largely prevails. An outlandish orchestra, consisting of the usual horns and tom-toms, bangs a wild, savage melody, with a kind of irregular rhythm, marking time, but without the faintest vestige of tune. The couples stand and jig, facing each other,—occasionally in a manner which is better left undefined, but usually with a solemnity defying all description. Now and again the male dancers utter a piercing whoop, and the couples forthwith change sides. It is impossible to conceive that fun or amusement can be extracted from such a monotonous performance. But that these good people do find enjoyment in it cannot be questioned, since they frequently continue performing this dance, which is known as the "Cubana," for many hours at a stretch, without moving a yard from the spot where they began. Another popular dance is the Canga, a sort of slow waltz, which, when danced by the class which dances in public in Havana, is the most indecent spectacle conceivable. Meanwhile the barbaric orchestra bangs ever, making noise enough to raise the dead—tom-tom whack, tom-tom wick, tom-tom whoop—*e da capo*. It ends by maddening the European ear, and the onlooker is forced to bolt or risk an epileptic seizure, or some such misfortune. This weird carnival ball, as seen from a box, is one of the most singular sights imaginable, but the spectator

must make up his mind to evil smells as well as noise —all the perfumes of Araby would not sweeten the theatre. The scenes in the brightly lighted streets outside struck me as infinitely preferable. The crowded cafés, before which groups of smartly dressed young negro mandolinists play, and very creditably, selections from popular operas, in the confident hope of being treated to ices, or something stronger, have a distinct and original charm. Punctually at twelve o'clock on Shrove Tuesday the cannon boomed from Morro Castle, announcing that King Carnival had just expired. On the morrow, the pious crowded the churches to receive the penitential ashes. Lent began in earnest, and was very rigorously kept, so far as the eating of flesh was concerned. An average Cuban negro would sooner take poison than a mouthful of meat on the abstinence days, although, I fear, his moral sense might easily be weighed and found wanting in other particulars.

The Cubans, notwithstanding their worship of the tom-tom and the horn, and the popularity of noisy music, possibly imported from Africa by the Congo slaves who swarm on the big plantations, are a very musical race. The *Tacon* opera-house, which can accommodate 5,000 persons, is, in its way, a very fine theatre, built in Italian fashion with tiers of boxes, one above another. They are separated by gilded lattices, so as to afford every possible means of ventilation. Round each tier of boxes is a sort of ambulatory or verandah, overlooking the great Square. The upper gallery is exclusively devoted to the coloured people,

who, on a Sunday, fill it to suffocation. They are considered the most critical part of the audience, and their appreciation or disapproval is generally well founded, and liberally demonstrated. The first two rows of boxes belong to the aristocracy and wealthy merchants, and the display of jewellery on a gala night used to be quite amazing. The lower part of the house is divided into a pit and orchestra stalls. When crowded, the *Tacon* presents a really fine appearance. The stage is, I should say, as large as that at Covent Garden, and the operas are perfectly mounted and staged. A great peculiarity of this theatre is the orchestra, which is of almost unrivalled excellence, although at least one half of its performers are coloured, and some of them full-blooded negroes. I think I am correct in saying that on several occasions the conductor himself has been a coloured gentleman. Two of the very best performances of *Aïda* (with Campanini and Volpini) I ever enjoyed, I saw at the *Tacon*, where some of the greatest vocalists of the present century have appeared, including Malibran, Grisi, Mario, Alboni, Tedesco, Patti, Nilsson, Nevada and Guerrabella (Miss Genevieve Ward). I have seen it stated that Mme. Adelina Patti made her debut in the Filarmonia of Havana. This is an error. This theatre is at Santiago, and it was there the fascinating prima donna won her first laurels. Her mother and father, Signor and Signora Barili Patti, both of them singers of the first rank, made, if I am not misinformed, their last appearance on the stage at the *Tacon* theatre. The Cubans do not care for the Spanish national drama. They prefer adaptations from the French and Italian;

and Havana, unlike Mexico, has not produced a single dramatist of note. Spanish companies come every year from Madrid, but they are rarely well patronised. On the other hand, Ristori, Salvini, Duse, and Sarah Bernhardt have received almost divine honours in the Cuban capital.

One night I dropped into the *Torrecillas*, a little fourth-rate house, and on going to the box-office to pay for my seat, to my utter astonishment I found the employee absent, although the theatre was open, and a crowd thronging in to attend a gratuitous rehearsal of a piece which was to be performed on the following evening for money. The house was dimly lighted. The orchestra consisted of a piano, and the back scene was formed of odds and ends of scenery jumbled together in the funniest confusion. A stoutish young fellow a sort of Sancho Panza, was rehearsing the company, the ladies of which lounged about in various parts of the house, smoking incessant cigarettes. The play was one of the kind known in Spain as a "Zarzuela," or farce. The plot was simple enough, dealing with the adventures of a runaway negro, who tried to become manager of a strolling troup of players. The fun consisted in admirable delineation of each character, and the spirited acting. One scene, representing the appearance of the troupe at Mocha, a country village, was irresistibly droll. Some of the actors went down among the audience, pretending to be country spectators, and cracked excellent jokes at the expense of the troupe on the topics of the day, and popular abuses in general. In the last scene the

national "Garacha" was admirably danced. It is as objectionable, in itself, as the "Cubana," but it was quite transformed by the grace of the artists.

The bull-ring and the cock-pit are still national institutions throughout Cuba. Each city has its ring and its cock-pit. I drove out one Sunday to the "Galleria," as it is called, at the corner of the Calle Manuel, in a rather low quarter of Havana. I found a motley assembly of beggars, cake-vendors, and negroes, hanging about the entry and the box office, if so I may call it, which was neat and smart enough for a metropolitan theatre. The price of admission to the best seats was only two shillings. Passing a bar, before which a noisy crowd was drinking gin and *aguardiente*, blaspheming and quarrelling, I found myself in the "Galleria," which is of circular form built of open wood-work, exactly like two large round hen-coops placed one on top of another. There were four galleries, with several rows of chairs, thronged by an excited betting crowd, which included the usual proportion of negroes, but no women. As I entered, a fight had just come to a close, and the noise was deafening. Everybody was shouting and gesticulating at once. In a few moments the bell rang, and comparative silence ensued. The ring was cleared, and two men appeared in the centre, each holding a beautiful bird in his hands. The Cuban breed of cocks, although small, is remarkably well-proportioned and elegant. I am no expert in cock-fighting and will simply jot down my impressions of the combat. At first I found it interesting enough, but, by and by,

when the stronger bird crippled its antagonist, the poor, bleeding creature was artificially excited to continue the battle to the bitter end, by being "restored" with spoonfuls of Santa Cruz rum blown in a spray from the mouth of its owner over its head, and the sight grew simply disgusting. I was relieved when it was all over, and the poor, beautiful bird lay dead. The audience interested me far more than the fight. The people around me were so absorbed in the death struggle that some faces grew ashen pale, others flushed, their eyes rolled, they roared, they bellowed, and they pantomimed from the lower to the upper galleries. Doré alone could have done justice to the scene, but, picturesque though it was, it was a degrading exhibition of cruelty and base passion. The upper classes, I am glad to say, have long ceased to frequent the "Galleria," and some of the best houses have even closed their doors to young men known to be frequenters of these cock-pits. I did not see a bull-fight while I was in Cuba. They were, I suppose, not in season, otherwise they are as frequent and as popular there as in Spain and the south of France. They are conducted in exactly the same ceremonious and pageantic manner as in Spain, and almost as magnificently, and, needless to say, they are as bloody, if not more so, and quite as demoralizing. If it were not hypocrisy on the part of an Englishman in these days of "general bookmaking," when the "special," announcing the names of the "winners," is more eagerly bought up than any containing political news of the highest importance, I might descant on the immorality of the Cuban weekly lottery. Every-

body is interested in it, and I am assured it is "a curse" to the country. Doubtless it is so, and so, indeed, are our own "winners." Gambling in some shape or other seems inherent in the human race, and I cannot see much difference between the Havanese lottery and our own racecourse. Both are equally dangerous to those who cannot afford to bet. In Cuba the wretched negro starves himself to put his last penny on some favourite number, and in London the bootblack goes without his dinner in the hope of doubling the "winner."

CHAPTER VII.

Matanzas.

The immediate environs of Havana are disappointing, although some of the neighbouring villages are pretty enough. Every visitor to Havana is sure to be taken to three places — Puentes Grandes, Marianao, and Carmelo. A little railway carries you, as slowly as steam can do it, in about an hour, out to Marianao. If it were not for the groups of palm trees and the huge plantain leaves, generally very dusty and tattered, hanging over the garden walls, you might easily mistake the country for certain districts in Northern France. It undulates, just as it does in Normandy, up and down over low-lying hills, and the straight roads, bordered with coca palm trees, reminded me forcibly of the poplar avenues round Rouen. Before very long, however, you are made aware that you are under the Southern Cross, for, just before you reach your destination, you form your first acquaintance with the banyan tree, of which there is a celebrated group, considered one of the finest in the West Indies, standing in the middle of a field. The central tree, which must be of great age, is of vast size. From its upper branches it has cast down numerous feelers, which, in

their turn, have become big trees, and so the one growth contrives to cover some four or five acres of ground. After you have amused yourself by walking in and out of the innumerable arches and avenues formed by this grand specimen of perhaps the most extraordinary species of tree in existence, you follow a narrow path, and walk on to Marianao, a Cuban village boasting an odd-looking church painted a vivid blue, and some very nice country houses, embedded in orange and banana orchards. There are a number of restaurants in the place, and on Sundays the foreign residents, especially the Germans, come out here to eat supper and drink lager-beer. What pleased me most about Marianao were the country lanes, which are bordered by hedgerows covered with delightful creepers, the coral,—with its clusters of pink and white flowers,—the morning glory, with its wealth of azure blossoms,—the scarlet passion flower,—the blue sweet pea,—and a species of wild stephanotis, with an overpowering scent.

Puentes Grandes lies half-way between Marianao and Havana. It possesses the only nail factory in the country, worked by several hundred coolies. Carmello is a village of restaurants and cabarets, situated at the head of a little sandy bay glorified by a tradition that it was once visited by Columbus. Hither people drive out of an evening from Havana, to eat oysters, lobsters, and other crustacea, and, above all, to enjoy the cool sea breeze. Here I first beheld the most astonishing of all flowers—the *aristolochia pelicana*. It is a variety of the *aristolochia sìpho*, which has been

recently brought over to England from America and acclimatised, and which is popularly known as the "Dutchman's pipe," on account of the peculiar shape of the flower, which is exactly like a little tobacco-pipe. The Cuban variety is a sturdy creeper, with enormous, heart-shaped leaves. This flower must be seen to be appreciated. When open, it presents the appearance of a huge porous plaster about a foot in diameter. The edge is perfectly white and waxy, the centre a dark brown, with a slit in the middle, opening into a pod-shaped cup, and furnished with sharp bristles, usually garnished with drops of syrup, to allure the flies and other insects, which, when once they enter that little "parlour," find themselves in a veritable ogre's castle, whence no escape is possible, for the hungry flower soon absorbs and devours them. When the pouch is full,—and it will contain several hundred insects,—the enormous flower closes, and assumes the exact shape of a beautiful white duck. Severed from its stem, and placed in the centre of a bouquet of flowers, or on a sheet of looking-glass in the centre of a dining-table, this weird flower produces a very startling effect. It is the custom in Havana to place one of these strange freaks of nature in the centre of a bouquet, which is always offered to a successful prima-donna on her first appearance at the National Theatre.

One fine morning towards the middle of Lent I left Havana with a friend, to make a tour of the other cities of the island, beginning with Matanzas.

A Cuban railway is unlike any other railway in the world. The carriages are built on the American plan,

with a promenade from end to end, but there are no glass windows, and when one considers the heat, one is thankful that there are no cushions, to harbour dust and insects. The conductor stands in front, and is perpetually ringing a bell, which does not seem to help on the speed of the train in the very least degree.

Havana has no far-stretching suburbs, like most European cities, and you very soon find yourself quite in the open country. It chanced that, on this particular morning, a thick, low fog hung like a misty veil over the fields, and the lofty palm trees shot up into the clear atmosphere above in the most fantastic manner. However, by-and-bye, as the sun grew stronger, the mist lifted entirely, and towards midday we found ourselves passing through an extremely pretty country, traversed in every direction by interminable lines of coca palm trees, which wound through the sugar-cane fields, otherwise not particularly picturesque. We stopped for luncheon at a village called, I think, Rincon, where there is a regular Cuban buffet. The principal dish, I remember, was roast sucking-pig, cold but succulent. Coolies and negroes came round with baskets of fruit—bananas, pineapples, oranges, mangoes, and zapadillos. After this station, we travelled between rocky cliffs, in the fissures of which grew the most exquisite ferns I have ever seen out of a hot-house, the hardy, glossy, oak-leaf fern, so sought after in Covent Garden Market being especially plentiful. At last, after a pleasant, but deadly slow journey, we arrived safely at Matanzas, which, after the capital and Santiago, is by far the most

flourishing city in the island. Its real name is San Carlos, though it is popularly known as Matanzas, or the "Butcheries." Most of the encyclopædias inform you that it is so called after a frightful massacre of Caribbees, which took place early in the 16th century. This is an error. There was no city here till 1649, when the town was founded on the site of an old slaughter-house, owned by the Havana butchers.

We drove straight from the station to the "Leon de Oro," reputed the best hotel in the island. Cuban hotels, even those in the capital, are none of them of superlative excellence, and although in all that concerns the elegances of life the "Inglaterra" the "Louvre" and the "Pasage" at Havana are infinitely superior to the old "Leon de Oro," they are distinctly its inferiors in point of cleanliness, and, above all, in the matter of cooking.

Very brilliantly painted in fresco are the walls of the "Golden Lion" of Matanzas. Venus rises from the sea in your bedroom, or rather in that portion of an enormous dormitory which is allotted to you. Paris offers the golden apple to the three goddesses in the dining-room, and the whole court of Olympus, more or less successfully limned by an Italian artist, occupies the lofty walls of the general sitting-room on the first and only floor. The waiters are nearly all Coolies, and very clean and tidy they are. The landlady, in the days of my youth, was a French, coloured dame of enormous size, but also of almost preternatural activity. "Madame" was everywhere, upstairs and downstairs, and never seemed to go to sleep. It

mattered little at what hour of the day or night you happened to come in, you were sure to find the old lady, with a huge turban on her head, ready to bid you welcome, with the very broadest of smiles. As my friend and myself had brought her a letter, which, by-the-way, she could not read, of introduction from one of her Havanese patrons, she made a prodigious fuss in our honour. She felt sure, she said, that, being Englishmen, we should like to have a bedroom all to ourselves, to which reasonable proposition we very naturally assented. Presently she took us upstairs to a very long and very lofty dormitory, furnished with about a dozen brass bedsteads, arranged against the walls in a double line, each duly protected by mosquito curtains, and supplemented by a table, a chair, an iron tripod, bearing a basin and jug, and a flat candlestick. Having paraded us once or twice up and down this apartment, she suddenly stopped in front of two neat little bedsteads standing side by side, and, pointing to them, informed us in Creole French (she came from Martinique) that she destined them for our accommodation. But what about the proffered privacy? Were we to dress and undress in the presence of the strange occupants of the other dozen beds, and were we to be soothed, or otherwise, throughout the dreary watches of the night, by their combined snores. We resolved, between ourselves, to make no comment, to leave fate and Madame to work out our destiny. We descended to our dinner without venturing the least observation. When we went upstairs again to unpack our travelling trunks, we were heartily amused to find that the

worthy old soul had fenced us off from our future companions, with four long sheets, fastened by old-fashioned washing-pegs, to a rope stretched tightly across the room.

I remember we had an excellent dinner, the best we had yet eaten in Cuba. There was a very good broth —*sopa de pan*—followed by a fair preparation of fresh fish—*pescado frito*. Then came a great national dish —sheeps' brains fried in butter, with tomato sauce, succeeded by a reasonably fat and tender chicken, *a la Creola*, that is to say, with a delicious sauce made with various vegetables; and a dish of *ternero asado* (roast veal) ended what might be termed the serious portion of the meal. Then came guava jelly, eaten with little cakes, and a splendid dessert of fresh bananas,—the small, stumpy, fat one, *plantano de Guinea*, is the only one which is eaten as a fruit in Cuba. The large ones, of the sort sent to England, are considered as vegetables, and either fried as a separate dish, like potatoes, or cut up in slices and used in salads. The Cuban oranges are magnificent, very large, pale in colour, and innocent of seeds. The pine-apples are, of course, splendid, and are cooked as sweet dishes, in a variety of ways. There is one necessary of life which you are obliged to dispense with, and that is butter, which is only likely to appear in the houses of the very rich, or at one or two of the best hotels in Havana. There is an appalling decoction called *mantiquella*, which is kept in a bottle, and poured out for the benefit of American and English visitors, who are asked to believe it is butter! God save the mark, it's exactly

like train-oil. Everything is fried in olive oil, but of excellent quality, so you soon learn to do without butter to your bread, and, indeed, with as little bread as maybe, for nowhere is it very good. Otherwise, Cuban cooking is not bad when once the traveller knows the ropes, and what to order. It is certainly much better than the Spanish *cuisine*. There is a Cuban cookery book in the British Museum, printed and published in Havana in the year 1879, the perusal of which I commend to those of my readers who are interested in such matters. They will learn how to make some excellent and very succulent dishes. Cuban cooks are not strong on sweetmeats, and they rarely, if ever, attempt pastry. On the other hand, their fruit cheeses, especially the famous guava jelly, are worthy of their world-wide renown. Ice was only introduced into the island about forty years ago, and is even now considered a great luxury; but a cocoa-nut gathered before dawn, and kept as much in the shade as possible until wanted, is the most refreshing of drinks. The milk which it contains is icy cold, and with a few spoonfuls of rum or brandy, and a little sugar thrown in, is really excellent. Then, too, wherever you go, you are sure to be offered *narangiata*, or orangeade, which all Cubans make to perfection. Excellent Spanish and French wines and lager beer are to be had in almost all the inns.

The lower part of every Cuban hotel is used as a café and restaurant, and stands open to the four winds of heaven. It begins to fill immediately after sunset, and in warm weather is never empty until four o'clock

in the morning. In the middle of the café is the kitchen, and in the centre of the kitchen will be found an indispensable retreat which does not add to the sanitary advantages of the establishment. Otherwise, a Cuban kitchen affords much interest and amusement to those in search of the picturesque. Round it are arranged little open charcoal stoves, above which are suspended an endless number of copper saucepans. Sometimes, up in a corner, is an image of our Lady of Guadaloupe, blessing, apparently, from the interior of her glass case, the motley gathering of cooks of all ages and colours, who are intently busy doing nothing. Here on the floor sits a little darkie shelling peas, and near him another small sable urchin howls because his ears have just been boxed for licking his fingers. Yonder is a group of chattering mulatresses whipping a cream, and there "Madame" herself roars at the top of her voice at the chief cook, standing frying chicken livers, strung on a skewer, over one of the innumerable charcoal fires, whose fumes would suffocate the whole noisy party, if this weird kitchen were not, but for its ceiling, quite an open air arrangement, for there are no glass windows anywhere in the house, the only protection against a storm being the green venetian blinds.

Our first night at the "Leon de Oro" was a memorable one. The hotel was packed, and, notwithstanding the seclusion of our canvas walls, it was impossible to get a wink of sleep,—in the first place, on account of the mosquitoes, and in the second on that of the chorus of snores which resounded on all sides after two

o'clock in the morning, when our neighbours, after chattering among themselves like so many magpies, and even singing in chorus, finally succumbed to the claims of nature, and tumbled to sleep. The next day Madame found us two small rooms at the top of the house, where we were quite comfortable for the rest of our visit.

Matanzas is a well-built city, situated on a very beautiful bay, and backed by an admirable range of hills. Two rivers flow through it, the Yumurri and San Juan. The fine Plaza de Armas, in front of the Cathedral, and in the very centre of the town, is planted with a double row of magnificent acacias. The church, dedicated to St Charles, is fair sized, and has an imposing tower, but is not otherwise interesting. There are two other smaller churches in the town, but Matanzas is looked upon, throughout the country, as anything but orthodox. There are, however, several convents, and two very well managed hospitals. The fashionable quarter of the city is called "Versailles." Here the wealthier citizens have built themselves a number of beautiful villas, in the usual classical, one-storied style. These dazzling white marble columns, elaborate iron-work balconies, mosaic pavements and handsome porticoes, are doubtless a very accurate reproduction of the sort of house which lined the Via Appia in the palmy days of ancient Rome. Most of these houses are frescoed with mythological subjects, and painted in bright colours, whose somewhat garish tones are subdued by the deep green of the wonderful vegetation which surrounds them, and

by the dazzling glare of the sunlight, which, pouring down from the deepest of blue skies, seems to mellow even the gaudiest colours into delightful harmony.

The chief attractions of Matanzas are not, however, within the city walls, but a pleasant drive's distance beyond its gates. The first of these are the far-famed caves of Bellamar. There are certain much-talked-of wonders of nature, the first sight of which is apt to disappoint you,—Niagara Falls, for instance, and even the Mammoth Caves of Kentucky; but the Matanzas caverns are so dazzlingly beautiful that you are both astonished and delighted. They surprise by their size, they fascinate by the clearness and brilliance of their crystal walls. The first chamber, called the "Gothic Temple," is 250 feet in length by 83 in width. Its walls are of pure crystal. From the lofty roof hang monster stalactites covered with millions of flashing crystals full of prismatic hues. Following the guide, who carries a limelight, you next enter a large hall, or chamber, which looks absolutely as if it had been made of whipped cream. Then, after passing through endless crystal halls, you reach the *fuente de nieve*, the snow-fountain, in which the stalactites have assumed the semblance of a cascade of frosted snow. These caves extend for about three miles, and are between 300 and 500 feet below the surface of the earth, and may therefore be reckoned amongst the largest in the world. They were discovered quite accidentally, some fifty years ago, by the workmen of a certain Don Manuel Santos Parga, who, whilst digging in this vicinity, fell into what afterwards proved to be one of

the principal of the thirty-eight halls, or caves, which have subsequently been discovered. To the credit of their proprietor, they are most beautifully kept, no one being allowed to use smoky torches, or defile the crystals in any way, and commodious bridges and foot-paths, which add considerably to the comfort of the visitor, have been built at the owner's expense.

The next attraction of Matanzas is the famous valley of the Yumurri. To see it to perfection, it should be visited, not by pale moonlight, but at the decline of day, when the sun is setting behind the low-lying hills on the opposite side of the fertile valley, through which the Yumurri river meanders like a silver ribbon, fringed with innumerable tiny tributary streams, which immensely increase the productive powers of this magnificent expanse of richly cultivated land. The vegetation is indescribably beautiful and varied. Every sort of palm tree grows, and as the land is undulating in character, the panorama is broken up in the most charming manner, by groups of slender columns, surmounted by waving plumes, which intercept, without impeding, the view of golden cane fields and the tender green coffee plantations which stretch in all directions, until it fades into the delicate mauve tint of approaching evening. The view over the valley of the Yumurri is one of those glorious things which a Milton might have described, a Turner or a Martin might have painted. It baffles the efforts of my humble pen. All I can say is that I have seen a good half of the fair world in which man is called to spend his petty span, but never have my eyes rested on any

scene which could equal this in poetic loveliness. It is a fragment, surely, left of that Paradise from which our first parents managed between them to shut out their descendants for ever. We lingered long, wondering at the beauty of it all, quite unable to tear ourselves away. The sun, having passed through the closing phases of its daily course, became a ball of glowing fire, and quenched itself within a violet cloud. The moon rose and flooded the happy valley with golden radiance, so brilliant that only the stars in the larger constellations, such as the Southern Cross, were visible.

CHAPTER VIII.

Cienfuegos.

To my mind, Cienfuegos is the Cuban port which should, under a sensible and progressive administration, offer the finest prospect for future development and prosperity. The bay is extremely beautiful, and on its deep expanse the combined fleets of the nations might anchor in perfect security. Four rivers, which might easily be rendered navigable, the Damuji, the Salado, the Caonao, and the Orimao, flow into its waters. Here, in the brighter times to come, when the Spaniards shall cease from troubling and the rebels be at rest, will surely be the capital of a new Cuba.

Cienfuegos is on the direct line to Panama, and, once the isthmus is cut, must become of vast commercial importance. At present it contains less than 20,000 inhabitants, and its trade is of no exceptional value. It is not an ancient city. It only dates from the beginning of the present century, and derives its name from the celebrated Cuban general, Cienfuegos. The church, a very hideous edifice, much older than the town, contains a famous Madonna, whose robes of cloth of gold and violet velvet were presented by Queen Isabella II., and who is the object of many

pious pilgrimages. The inns are fairly good, for Cuba. In one of them, La Fonda de Paris, I was nipped by a scorpion, and that hotel is consequently bound up, as far as I am concerned, with very unpleasant associations.

The country round Cienfuegos is far more interesting than the town, and a long drive enabled me to form the acquaintance of a very interesting type of Cuban—the Guajiro, or white peasant, who abounds in this part of the island, where many of them cultivate a few acres, and live a life quite distinct from that of the rest of the world. The Guajiro is generally of Catalonian or Andalusian origin. Many trace their descent a long way back to ancestors who came over to Cuba a century or two ago. As a rule, the men are handsome, manly fellows. They sit a horse as if born on its back, and seem, like the centaurs of yore, to form part and parcel of the animal. Their dialect, a mixture of Spanish and of African, picked up among the negroes, is exceedingly difficult to understand. The Guajiro used to be a slave-owner, and a terribly hard task-master was he, for if there is one thing he hates more than another, it is work. He enjoys sitting in the shade, smoking his cigarette, and lazily, drowsily, watching his female belongings at their labour. On the other hand, when roused to effort, he can perform miracles : ride heaven only knows how many miles, in the blazing sun, and build a palm hut in a few hours. Living from hand to mouth, rarely, if ever, taking the trouble to cultivate his tiny domain properly, the true Guajiro is a perfect

illustration of the fact that "man wants but little here below." His chief food consists of bananas hot, and bananas cold, of tomatoes, and other vegetables and fruits unknown in European markets, which are said to be both excellent and nourishing. He rarely touches meat, except pork, on which he mainly feeds, but he often catches fish for his dinner, and looks upon an iguana or a bull-frog as a desirable delicacy. When he is not a liliputian landowner, he earns his living as a herdsman, for, from childhood up, he has acquired a vast experience in the management of cattle and horses—and, above all, of niggers. Under these circumstances he is obliged to work. He hires himself out by the week or month, during the harvest season, like any other labourer, and thereby earns a fair wage, which he spends freely, on Sundays and *fiestas*, in the taverns, or in betting at cock-fights or at the bull-ring.

The Guajiro who owns a few acres of land is a far more interesting individual than his fellow, the hired labourer. He is so gloriously, insolently, independent. What cares he for the luxuries of life, if he have but a dish of bananas for his dinner, and a smart suit of clothes in his chest to wear o' Sundays? Six days out of the seven see him pottering about his farmyard, a magnificent dunghill, on which his brood of dark-eyed urchins flourishes in primitive costumes, and spends its time in festive sports, together with the family dogs, pigs, and cows. On high days and holidays he makes himself very smart, dons his white "ducks" and his untanned pig-skin boots, his gaudy waistband, and his broad-

brimmed straw hat. The rest of the time he wears his pants and his jacket only. A born musician, he plays the guitar, and often sings charmingly. Sometimes that modern wandering Jew, the Italian organ-grinder, accompanied by a monkey, stops in the dusty road in front of the Guajiro's domicile, and tunes up "Il Baccio," or the "Blue Danube Waltz," whereupon the Guajiro and his wife and their brood fall into an ecstacy of wonderment, and reward the musician liberally, being under the impression that his music is due to his skill and not to mere mechanical contrivance.

The Guajira (the Missis) is also a character in her way. On her shoulders, poor soul, falls the burden of the heavier work, all except tending the cattle. She does the cooking, such as it is! She mends the family rags, and washes them, and looks after the skinny fowls—nothing on earth will fatten a Cuban fowl! Above all she keeps a vigilant eye on her mischievous flock of Guajiritos, who never learn to read or write, but sprawl about the filthy yard, or, when they are old enough, depart on joyous expeditions in the woods, to search for natural curiosities fit for food, such as iguanas, lizards, a large fat black snake, said to be very tender, and better than an eel, frogs as big as your head, and other such horrors, which the Guajira converts into succulent dishes.

The family mansion is built of palm branches, and has a rickety, earthquaky appearance about it, that may be very picturesque, but must be very uncomfortable. The whole family sleeps on the straw-

littered floor. Such Guajiros as I visited seemed to be happy enough, but in the rainy season they often suffer from rheumatism, ague, and other like diseases. Thousands of them have joined the rebellion, in the hope of its eventually leading to a betterment in their condition, which, as they get into closer contact with civilization, grows daily less endurable.

The Guajiro of bygone times, with his bright eyes and his guitar, is the starving reconcentrado of to-day. I like to think of him as he was, not as he *is*. Let us, therefore, behold the Señor and the Señora Guajiro in all the glory of their war-paint, *en route* for the procession of the Angel, for instance, in their village church of Santa-Fé. The Señor is dressed up in all his Sunday go-to-meeting best, a costume very like that of our own coster-boys, and the same blood doubtless courses through their veins, for I am assured, on authority, that Whitechapel 'Arry and his "donah" originally came from the sunny land of Spain, in Merry King Charles II.'s time, to sell oranges to benighted Britishers, and that, liking us and our ways, he then and there condescended to take up his abode amongst us. Certainly the Cuban Guajiro shares 'Arry's propensity for mother-of-pearl and silver buttons, with which he covers every available part of his clothing, his jacket, his waistcoat, and his trousers. By her lord's side tramps the faithful Guajira, a very beautiful young matron, frequently, with delicate, regular features and soft brown eyes with sweeping lashes. Her gown is made of gaudy chintz, patterned with flaring bunches of roses. Most probably the

fabric was made in England in the tasteless early Victorian days, and intended as furniture covering. Its train sweeps up a cloud of dust, for it would be derogatory for any respectable Guajira to lift her skirts like those miserable English and American women, who hold up their petticoats to their knees, and go picking their way along as if they were treading on eggs and were afraid of breaking them. The very negresses know better. Nevertheless, the Guajira takes good care to display her very small, brown, stockingless feet, thrust into a pair of green or red zapatos, or slippers, in which she intends to dance the Creola. Over her shoulders is a China crape shawl, either white or rose-coloured — a wedding present,—and her raven tresses are set off by a bunch of wax-like stephanotis or of scarlet hibiscus. Before and behind their parents trot the "family," some dozen of them, the baby borne in the arms of a small but very gorgeous negress. As to these little brown ones, I have seen them trotting along without a stitch of clothing, with their hair very neatly brushed and their small tawny feet encased in patent leather shoes, the whole shaded by an old scarlet parasol. Sometimes, however, the Guajiro and the Guajira may be particularly well-to-do, and in this case they do not condescend to trapese along the dusty roads like the common of mortals, negroes and mulattoes and "sich'z," but make a triumphal entry on horseback, or on a little Cuban pony, gloriously bedecked with silver and brass bells and buttons, and long tags of yellow and red worsted balls. Or else they come along on bullock-back, the Guajira

sitting sideways on the beast's back, keeping her position by clinging to her husband's waistband. Nothing quainter or more picturesque can be imagined than this, to European ideas, queerest of methods of locomotion. The bullock gallops clumsily enough, but seems to fancy himself immensely in his rather novel character of horse. If, perchance, you meet a dozen or so of these singular equestrians, you are likely to retain a pleasant recollection of their picturesqueness to your dying day.[1]

But let us hasten, or else we shall lose our Guajiro and Guajira in the crowd in the *fiesta*, and that would be a sad pity. Their first duty is to go to church, where we shall see them praying with pathetic sincerity before the illuminated shrine of Our Lady of the Cobre or of Guadalupe. No philosophical doubt haunts the consciences of these good folk. God and His Blessed Mother hear every word they say to Them, and, as they are on very friendly terms with the Powers that be, they place their affairs most frankly before Them, firmly believing that if they do their best to keep straight, according to their lights, their prayers will surely be heard, else why pray at all? They have a good deal to pray for. The Guajiro slily asks that he may be inspired to bet on the winning cock, and the Guajira has a yellow lottery ticket in her bosom, the number of which was selected at the instance of a notorious African witch. Now that was very wrong, and the Guajira's mind is not at all easy on the subject, for the new Cura, Padre

[1] In a great many parts of the Eastern Province, cattle are used as horses.

Pablo has told her over and over again that Lolla, the witch, is a black limb of Satan, and that if things were as they ought to be, she would long ago have been burnt at the stake. But still, if Our Lady would but make that number win, there would be ten or twenty dollars to the good, and see what a lot of comforts that would enable her to get. And, besides that, is not the old Guajiro's grandmother, who is nearly a hundred, ill at home, and is she not always wanting medicine, and things that poor people cannot afford to buy, and, the children are really getting too old to go about without any clothing, especially Cassandrina, who is nearly seven years of age. But how is one to buy dresses, in these hard times, for growing wenches, even if they are one's own children, unless a little windfall drops into one's lap? Therefore, "O Most Pitiful Lady of the Cobre, ask your Son, whose image wears such a pretty frock of sky blue satin, with a golden fringe, to let old black Lolla's number win. *Por amor de Dios.*"

Being perfectly satisfied that their prayers are duly registered in the Court of Heaven, the worthy couple and their brood, who, by-the-way, have been staring all the time, with eyes as big as halfpence, at the gorgeous robes of Our Lady of the Cobre, flock out of church into the broad, sunny plaza, where, although it is only six o'clock a.m. (everything in Cuba is done at an unearthly hour on account of the heat), the Procession is already beginning to form, so as to be over before High Mass begins. Bless me, how magnificent it all is! So much better done than in the

days of the old Cura, a dreadful old person, concerning whom there were so many queer stories. Since our blessed Pope, Leo XIII., has come to the throne, things *have* changed for the better.

First come the confraternities of the Precious Blood and of Our Lady of the Cobre, all very decently dressed, the blacks and the whites mixed up, on a footing of perfect equality, holding candles in their hands, without any distinction of caste or colour. Then the Children of Mary, not a few of them dressed up as Saints,—St Agnes with her lamb, St John with sheepskin wound round his chubby limbs, St Francis as a little monk, and so forth. And lastly, the priests in their showiest vestments, and the choir boys with their incense, and the climax of the function, the Angel,—that is to say, a chariot drawn by two white oxen, whose sweeping horns are tipped with gold foil, in which, on a throne made of leaves and artificial roses, sits a little girl attired as an angel with a flaxen wig, for in tropical countries, where mortals are generally black-haired, all Celestial beings are supposed to be blondes. The angel's wings are made of coloured bits of paper, cut in the shape of feathers, arranged with a distinct eye to artistic effect. When the angel and her chariot arrive in front of the Church the priests bring forth the statue of Our Lady of the Cobre, and place it under a gorgeous canopy, where it remains, whilst the terrestrial angel recites a *loja* or sonnet, in honour of the Blessed Lady. Then the Benediction is given, all the motley crowd drops on its knees, and afterwards everybody hurries into the Church to hear Mass, and so the

religious part of the fiesta ends. Later in the day after the mid-day siesta, we shall find the Guajiro at the cockpit, which women are prohibited by law from attending, so that the Guajira will be discovered sitting outside the village fonda, gossiping with her cousins and friends, and sipping tamarind water, whilst her numerous progeny disport themselves in the middle of the square, where there is a sort of fair in progress. If the favourite cock wins,—and it must surely win on this special occasion,—the Guajiro will be in the best of humours, and he and his wife will dance the Creola until the small hours, for a Cuban dances even when he is half-dead. Long before the sun rises our friends will have wended their way home, and there will be but little joy in their lives until the next fiesta comes round. But as there happen to be seventy-two of them besides fifty-two Sundays, the chintz dress with the big roses will stir up the dust between the farm and Santa-Fé on many an occasion yet, before Christmas comes round again, and everybody goes to pray before the Infante de Dios[1] in the Parish Church.

In the neighbourhood of Cienfuegos, I had the questionable pleasure of beholding a Cuban "duck hunt." In the diary of our good Boy-King, Edward VI., appears the following entry :—

"1550, June 4. Sir Robert Dudley, eldest (surviving) son to the Earl of Warwick, married Sir John Robsart's daughter, Amy, after which marriage, there were certain gentlemen that did strive who should

[1] Literally God's Baby.

first take away a goose's head which was hanged alive on two cross posts."

The cruel sport, at one time considered a courtly pastime in England, is still a favourite in Cuba. Two posts are set up, some three yards apart, and to the centre of the cross beam a live duck or goose is tied by the legs, head downwards. Then some ten or twenty men on horseback dash under the posts, and the victor is he who "takes away the goose's head" as he gallops through. The wretched bird's head being well greased, it often happens that the poor creature's sufferings are prolonged for many minutes, whilst the wild crew of horsemen strive to wrench it off, without losing their balance or falling from horseback. The hubbub is deafening, everybody shouts at once, and, above the din, you can hear the piercing shrieks of the half-strangled fowl. As all the horses must pass under the comparatively narrow gangway, many are thrown down, while others take fright and gallop off, frequently leaving their *caballeros* sprawling, and perhaps badly damaged, on the ground. It is a disgusting and most cruel exhibition, and makes one feel sorry that it should have been included among the wedding festivities of so interesting and much to be pitied a heroine as Amy Robsart.

CHAPTER IX.

Trinidad and Santiago de Cuba.

The next place of importance on our tour was Trinidad de Cuba, a queer little city of about 18,000 inhabitants, with funny old-fashioned houses, their windows protected by thick iron gratings, like those of a mediæval Italian city, scrambling in somewhat disorderly fashion up and down the sides of a steepish hill called the Vija, or Watch Tower. Trinidad is situated about ten miles inland from the sea-shore, and is said to be one of the oldest and quaintest town in this part of the West Indies, having been founded by Diego Velasquez in 1513. Historically speaking, its chief interest centres round Cortez, who started on his famous expedition to Mexico from the neighbouring bay of Casilda.

In a little shop in Trinidad, where ink and paper and a few old books were sold, I picked up an almost contemporary engraving of Hernando Cortez, which represents him as a fine-looking warrior, attired in a most elaborate suit of richly damascened mail, over which he wears a striped petticoat-like garment reaching below his knees. His feet are encased in plate armour. On his head he wears a splendid helmet,

SANTIAGO.

from which float a score of prodigiously long ostrich feathers. In his hand he bears a spear. The background is a view of a distant city, with several palm trees. The features are perfectly regular, and the illustrious Lothario sports a sweeping moustache, and has a dare-devilry expression which the ancient and skilful limner has reproduced with apparently scrupulous fidelity. It is evidently an original portrait, and is dated 1542. It was copied, in all probability, from some contemporary oil-painting, and engraved, of course, in Europe—probably in Flanders.[1]

We had early dinner here, at the hospitable residence of a rich American planter, who has built himself a large and handsome house, just outside the town, and furnished it sumptuously. It was very pleasant to meet cultivated and intellectual women in such an out-of-the-way part of the world, and we took leave of our host and hostess—the lady an excellent botanist—regretfully, bearing away with us big baskets of luscious fruit and a bouquet of exquisite flowers.

Late in the afternoon we embarked for Santiago on board a neat little steamer which plies along the coast from Havana twice a week. We should gladly have stayed a little longer at Trinidad; but the following was Palm Sunday, and I was anxious to reach Santiago for Holy Week, although my companion, being nothing like so indefatigable a sightseer as myself, was much put out by my persistence.

The coast line between Trinidad and Santiago is

[1] Exhibited by the writer in the West Indian Court of the Colonial Exhibition.

extremely pretty—at least what we saw of it, for darkness soon sets in in these latitudes, there being absolutely no twilight, as in more northern regions. We were able, however, to admire the very beautiful cluster of "cays" which rise out of the sea in all directions, some of them large enough to be habitable, though they are left desolate, and others mere barren rocks, with a palm tree or so growing on their crests. The effect they produced in the setting sunlight was exquisite enough to excuse the enthusiastic encomiums of Christopher Columbus when he first beheld them, and mistook them for the islands mentioned by Marco Polo as being off the coast of Asia.

At last the sun went down in a glorious blaze of purple and gold; a blue darkness enveloped the enchanting scene. The night air was delightfully balmy, so we sat on deck until quite late, being joined by several American and Cuban ladies and gentlemen who were going our way. A remarkably intelligent Bostonian, Major B——, said in the course of conversation, that he felt sure Cuba would, within a few years, have passed out of Spanish hands into those either of England or America. He had apparently great interests in the island, knew every inch of it, and assured us that its fertility and resources were incalculably great. It was, he said, in a very backward state.

"On the majority of the plantations," he continued, "there are no improved implements of husbandry—no labour-saving machines—nothing, indeed, which indicates an advanced or advancing agriculture, although

the machinery for grinding the cane and making sugar is often of the best and latest pattern. With the most generous of soils, there is worse culture in Cuba than anywhere else in the civilized world, except, perhaps, in the southern parts of Italy or Spain, and in both instances from like causes—that is, from the consolidation of immense landed estates in the hands of a few, mainly absentees—and the consequent withdrawal of the sources of national wealth from general circulation.

"There are, comparatively speaking, only a small number of acres of cultivable land held by small proprietors, who work on their own soil. The largest number of acres are owned by Spanish and Cuban grandees, some of whom have not been in the island for twenty years. They draw their revenue hence to dissipate it in a whirl of frivolity, either in Paris or Madrid. This system of accumulation in mortmain has hung for generations like a millstone around the necks of the Cuban people, and will, I am afraid, continue so to do. The abolition of slavery will, however, surely make a difference. Very soon the large estates will have to be cut up for want of sufficient hands; and the raising of cane, the grinding of it and the making of it into sugar, will become two different occupations, similar to the plan adopted in Germany, where the sugar-maker either buys the beet crop entirely from the farmer, or grinds the beets on shares of the sugar made. Then, again," remarked our new friend, "I cannot help alluding to the vast difference in characteristics,—though they spring from the same race,—between the Cubans and the Spaniards. The

aggregation of men into cities for purposes of trade, though necessary, does not tend to develop their intellectual faculties. The habit of acting in masses, or with masses, as every urban population must do, breeds a tendency to sacrifice duty to political expediency. Principles are continually yielded to the will of others, and lose their sacredness. In a rural population there is more isolation and more individuality. This is peculiarly the case with the Cuban planters, farmers, guarijos, and labourers. An agricultural population has always been deemed the most simple-minded, and its character, whatever it may be, the most unchangeable. So here, also, the Creoles are more unsophisticated than the Spaniard, and have fewer of the vices and needs of modern society.

"After all, nations, like individuals, grow up under the influence of a vast body of experiences. Not one cause, but a multitude of causes, extending through many years, make people different from each other, —even those of the same race, as is the case here in Cuba. They may be gradually moulded, by these experiences, into absolute antagonism. The Spaniards are well aware of the fact, and do not hesitate to say so. They acknowledge that they can raise almost everything in this beautiful and fertile isle—except Spaniards. Though, year after year, there is a steady stream of immigration from the home country, it does not change the characteristics of the natives. It appears to be a law of immigration that, if not the immigrant himself, his children at all events, are sure to adopt the modes of thought of the people among

whom their parents have made their home. How could it be otherwise? The children grow up with the children of the country, and it becomes their country. The most durable of all associations—those of childhood—make the children of the immigrant as faithful and as patriotic as those of the men who have lived for generations in the country. All in vain does Spain pour her troops into this island. Granted that by superior numbers she maintains her sway over this people,—what a barren conquest it is, when you come to think of it! The Cubans hate those who govern them, and the Spaniards never feel secure. True, history tells us of but one way by which the national character of a people can be modified, and that is by conquest; but even conquest, without beneficial administration, producing assimilation, fails, as it must fail where there is an absolute rule by one antagonistic people over another, which engenders hatred, and foments a passionate rebellion, even at the risk of martyrdom. The Spaniards are a fine race, but they utterly misunderstand the difference which has grown up between themselves and the Cubans. Although they acknowledge them their own children, they persist in treating them as inferiors, and governing them accordingly. Every attempt at improvement on the part of the Cubans is systematically stamped out by the Government.

"The abolition of slavery has not proved a blessing either to the slaves or their late owners. Like everything Spanish, it has been badly planned, and has brought ruin to thousands without benefiting the negroes.

"The island is cruelly overtaxed, to keep up a garrison fifty times more numerous than would be necessary if it were properly administered. I am quite sure Spain will eventually lose this rich possession. I assure you, and without the least prejudice, I think her quite incapable of keeping it. She has had any amount of experience, but of the wrong sort; and as to her men, her governors and commanders, however honest they may be in their own country, so soon as they land here they grow either corrupt or tyrannical."[1]

Morning found us running along some of the grandest coast scenery in the world: at this point the Macaca or Sierra Maestra Mountains rise boldly from the sea, to the height of 5000 and 6000 feet. The Ojo del Toro, one of the highest peaks of the range, is fully visible far away in the extreme distance, and towering above it you perceive the sharp peak of Turquino, the loftiest in the whole island, 6800 feet high. I was much struck by the resemblance between this coast-line and that between Nice and Monte Carlo. The colouring is almost identical, the sea as deep a blue as the Mediterranean; and the slopes of the rocky mountains are clothed with the same rich tints, shading from indigo to the palest grey. At about ten o'clock we were informed we were nearing Santiago, but it was a considerable time before the city rose in sight, long, even, after we had passed Cabanas, the first fort.

Santiago Bay is shaped like a champagne bottle, with

[1] From notes made some years ago of the conversation in question.

a narrow neck and an oblong body. It is a most difficult harbour to enter, and the town ought to be impregnable; but the fortresses, although architecturally imposing,—especially the Morro, which looks like a mediæval castle, its walls rising straight out of the rocks,—are, I am assured, mere toys so far as modern warfare is concerned. The bay itself, on which the city is built, spreads out, once you have passed the straits, like a glorious lake, circled by green hills, thickly covered by the most varied vegetation, with groups of tall palm-trees standing out conspicuously here and there. Presently, a turn brings you in front of the city, with its lofty cathedral towers, and its brightly painted houses, terraced up the hill to a height of about 500 feet above the level of the sea.

There is no more picturesque bay in the world than this, unless, indeed, it be that of Naples. The scene is so enchanting, so brilliant, that one is perfectly enraptured, and feels inclined to burst into open applause, as if in the presence of some grand stage effect. Everything seems to have been arranged by nature for some pageant. Nor is the illusion lost on landing, for as you climb the steep streets you are constantly attracted by some picturesque and unusual object or view. Here, for instance, facing you, as you step to earth, is a fruit stall such as you can only see in Santiago. Thousands of huge bunches of bananas, varying in colour from the deepest apple-green to the palest gold, cover its lofty walls. These green ones are unripe, and are intended for exportation. Then come countless rows of pineapples, pyramids of

oranges, baskets of crocodile pears and custard apples, and enormous clusters of purple plums.

We put up at an hotel kept by an old Cuban, who, understanding European ways, gave us two separate though very tiny bedrooms, and made us as comfortable as possible. For luncheon he sent us up an excellent omelette, the first we had tasted since we left New York. I remember, too, we had ripe mangoes here, for the first time, and liked them only fairly well. Tropical fruit, barring bananas, oranges, and pineapples, is, to my thinking, mighty insipid. The Cuban mango, however, has its charms.

Santiago de Cuba is by far the most historical city in the country. It was founded in 1515 by Diego Velasquez, who landed here, in obedience to the commands of Diego Columbus, on his first voyage from Hayti, to take formal possession of the island. From the port of Santiago, too, Juan de Grijalva started in 1518 on his famous expedition for the conquest of Yucatan. Hitherto also came Hernando Cortez, bent on the same undertaking.

Less than a quarter of a century after these memorable visits, the place had become so peopled with new settlers that it was elevated to the dignity of a city, and, in 1527, was created a bishopric. A year later, Narvaez set forth hence on his memorable expedition for the conquest of Florida, whence "he never more returned." Later in the same year Hernando de Sotto arrived, accompanied by over a thousand armed men, to assume the command of the entire island. He brought with him his wife, Doña Isabella

de Bobadilla, a lady who was famous for her beauty and her virtues. During his celebrated expeditions into the Americas, he left her here, in the responsible position of Governess of the island. She was the only woman who ever ruled in Cuba. Her sway was beneficent and mild, but the chroniclers relate that when months and even years passed without her receiving any letters from her husband, she "pined and languished, and fell into a lethargic state, so that her life was despaired of." Whether Doña Isabella Bobadilla died in Cuba or returned to Spain, I have never been able to ascertain. There is no mention of her having been buried in the Cathedral here, where Velasquez was certainly entombed, for in 1810 his body was found by some workmen in a stone coffin, at a distance of about twenty feet below the soil.

The rest of the history of the town is a repetition of that of Havana, a series of sieges by pirates and buccaneers. In 1662 it was attacked by Lord Windsor, and bombarded by a squadron of fifteen vessels. The English landed, destroyed the Morro Fort, blew up the Cathedral, and otherwise behaved themselves more like Pagans than Christians.

On Palm Sunday morning, we went to the Cathedral to see the great function of the blessing of the palms. The church is very large—the largest in the island—and built in the usual Hispano-American style, with a squat dome in the middle, and two rather fine towers on each side of the façade. The nave is of unusual width, and the side chapels, of which there are a

great number, are full of rare marbles, and splendid mahogany woodwork. The stalls in the magnificent choir and the seats throughout the church are all made of solid deep red mahogany; the edifice otherwise presents nothing of interest, excepting the priestly vestments, very fine specimens of old Spanish needlework. We found the church packed, most of the ladies being in deep mourning, but in low-necked dresses, which, at so early an hour, produced a startling effect. It afforded us an opportunity for a most interesting study of feminine shoulders, varying in tint from the snowy white of the Creola, to the dainty olive of the mulatress, and the ebony black of the ladies who originally hailed from the Congo. The stately ceremonies, on this solemn occasion, were exactly the same as those in all other Catholic churches throughout the world. The priests, however, carried some very fine palm branches, their long fronds tipped with gold tinsel. In the afternoon there was a sermon preached by a fiery little Capuchin monk, who banged his hands on the edge of the pulpit with such force that I am sure they must have been black and blue by the time he had finished.

In the evening we went for a long drive through some of the most beautiful scenery I have ever seen. On the following day there was not much in the way of sacred pageantry. On Holy Thursday the whole town turned out in deep mourning to visit the Sepulchre in the Churches. Meanwhile the opera house, the theatres, and all other places of public amusement were hermetically closed, and Santiago

did not present a very lively appearance, but as we had plenty to see in the neighbourhood, this did not trouble us much. The Good Friday procession was well worth seeing. It was a miniature edition of the procession which takes place in Seville, and was of interminable length. All the confraternities took part in it. At intervals, life-sized groups made in carved wood, representing episodes in Our Lord's Passion, were carried on the shoulders of ten or a dozen negroes. Then came the image of Our Lady of Sorrows, dressed in the full Court costume of the sixteenth century, made of cloth of silver, with a mantle of the richest purple velvet. This was followed by the Archbishop and his clergy, and the grandees of the place, wearing their decorations, officers in uniform, and gentlemen in evening dress. The effect of the procession winding through the narrow streets was extremely picturesque, and it was received on all sides with profound respect, for the people of Santiago are the most orthodox on the island, and also, by-the-way, the most intelligent and the best-looking. Their good looks are said to be due to their numerous intermarriages with French women, daughters of emigrants from San Domingo, who made their appearance here at the end of the last century. Many of the ladies of Santiago are quite beautiful, and would be much more so if they did not plaster their faces with cascaria powder to such an extent that many of them make themselves look like female clowns.

On Holy Saturday morning we were awakened, very early, by the most hideous noises, firing off of pistols,

squibs, and rockets. The population were busily engaged in hanging Judas Iscariot, an effigy of this archtraitor being actually suspended to a lamp-post opposite our hotel, while a vast assembly round it yelled excitedly, insulting it with an earnestness that might have been intelligible had it been Judas in the flesh instead of a sham, stuffed presentment.

Santiago was at one time quite a literary centre. Some years back one or two learned priests devoted themselves there to the study of botany and astronomy, among them being Padre Luis de Montes, who made a complete catalogue of the flora of the island. Doña Luisa Perez de Montes de Oca, a native of Santiago, has written some of the finest sonnets in contemporary Spanish literature, and Doña Gertrude Gomez de Avellanda, also born at Santiago, is another delightful poetess, whose name is well known wherever the Spanish language is spoken. One name, however, towers, in Cuban literature, over all others—that of José Maria Heredia, who was born at Santiago in 1803. His father, a gentleman of considerable position and wealth, and ardent patriot, was exiled to Mexico, and carried with him his motherless child, then only three years of age. At sixteen Heredia lost his father, and returned to Havana, where, in 1823, he was admitted to the bar, and sent to practise at the Supreme Court of Puerto Principe. His open expressions of indignation at the manner in which his country was mishandled, and his well-known liberal opinions on political and social subjects, eventually roused the suspicions of the Government, and he was

privately advised to leave the island with all speed, unless he wished to end his days in prison. He took the hint, abandoned Cuba for America, and settled in New York. In 1825 he published his first volume of poetry, which contained the celebrated "Exiles' Hymn," the opening lines of which are singularly appropriate to present circumstances.

"Fair land of Cuba! on thy shores are seen
Life's far extremes of noble and of mean,
The world of sense in matchless beauty dress'd,
And nameless horrors hid within thy breast.
Ordain'd of Heaven the fairest flower of earth,
False to thy gifts, and reckless of thy birth,
The tyrant's clamour, and the slave's sad cry,
With the sharp lash in insolent reply,—
Such are the sounds that echo on thy plains,
While virtue faints, and vice unblushing reigns.
Rise, and to power a daring heart oppose!
Confront with death these worse than deathlike woes,
Unfailing valour chains the flying fate,
Who dares to die shall win the conqueror's state!"

Another very remarkable poem, published a little later (1833), is the famous "Niagara," made familiar to English readers by the late Mr Cullan Bryant's noble blank-verse translation. Never has the grandest of cataracts been more magnificently described, but, even in the presence of its overwhelming majesty, Heredia could not forget the mournful beauty of his beloved Cuba, and through the tremendous sound of its waters he thought he detected the rustling of the palms of his native forests, when tossed about by some overwhelming storm. Heredia died in Mexico in 1838. He was

a man of exceeding integrity, and most generous and amiable. As a poet, he is acknowledged among the greatest who have cast honour on the tongue of Calderon and Cervantes.

Milanes is another poet who first saw light at Santiago. He was a man of humbler origin than Heredia, and of more subtle and refined genius. He died young, of consumption, but his works, which were published some years after his death, are considered classics by the Spanish. They are perfect in form, exquisite in thought, but intensely melancholy. It has been said of Milanes that "he saw life through tears." The greatest poet Cuba has produced after Heredia, Gabriel de la Concepcion Valdes, better known by his *nom-de-plume* of Placido, was born, not at Santiago,—although he passed some years of his life there,—but at Matanzas. He was a mulatto by birth. Nature and fortune were against him. His origin was of the lowest; his father was a half-cast slave, and he was hideously ugly, miserably poor, and very imperfectly educated. Yet he triumphed over every obstacle, and has left a great name in Hispano-American literature. In 1844, rumours of an intended rebellion among the slaves having reached the ears of the Captain-General at Havana, a number of negroes and even poor whites (Guajiros), suspected of sympathising with the slaves, were arrested, and some scores of them suffered death under the lash. The poet Placido, of whom the whole coloured population was intensely proud, was accused of having fermented this rebellion by his eloquence. He was forthwith arrested, and

thrown into prison, and, though he protested his innocence, he was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be shot. Fortunately for literature, some time elapsed between the passing of the sentence and its execution, and the delay enabled him to compose his two finest poems—the sublime "Prayer to God" and the touching "Farewell to his Mother." These fine works would alone suffice to make the name of any poet in any language. Placido met his fate on 8th June 1844, in the Great Square of Matanzas, together with nineteen other persons, accused of abetting the negro rebellion. He walked from his prison with a firm step and unbandaged eyes, and himself gave the signal to fire. Unfortunately, he was only wounded, and fell in great agony to the ground. The crowd was moved to horror and pity, but Placido silenced his many friends present, and, rising to his feet, said firmly, "Farewell, world,—ever pitiless to me." Then, pointing to his own brow, he cried, "Soldiers, fire here." In another instant he fell dead—shot through the head.

Placido addressed several graceful sonnets to the Queen Regent of Spain, Christina, mother of Isabella II., who took some interest in his fate, and openly expressed her indignation when she learnt of his tragic death. Mr William Hurlbut, in his *Pictures of Cuba*, gives an admirable study of the works of this remarkable poet. "Placido's images," says he, "are often pathetic in their originality, as, for instance, when he compares the sudden passing of the moon from behind the cliffs into the open starlit sky, to the advent

into the ball-room of a beautiful woman, superbly dressed, and wearing a cashmere shawl. Quaintly barbaric this image seems, yet how charged it is with the sad history of gorgeous dreams and warm visions, prisoned in the poet-brain of an outcast and a Pariah."

It would be scarcely just to Havana, if I were to create an impression that Cuban literary genius was peculiar to the Eastern Province. Havana has also produced several fine poets. Ramon Zambrana, who, by-the-way, married the poetess Doña Luisa Perez de Monte de Oca, is a lyrist of the first rank. His story is quite a romance. The poems of Doña Luisa de Oca were published under a manly *nom-de-plume*. Admiring them exceedingly, Zambrana entered into a correspondence with the author, then living at Santiago. It was only after keeping up a very lively and interesting correspondence for over a year that he accidentally discovered he had been writing to a woman. A very trivial incident revealed the truth. In one of her letters the lady enclosed, by mistake, a note intended for her milliner. On this the gentleman determined to proceed to Santiago and make the acquaintance of his fair correspondent, whom he discovered to be both beautiful and wealthy. Very soon after the marriage, unfortunately, Zambrana fell ill, and died in the flower of early manhood.

Don Jose de la Luz y Caballero, who was for a long time Director of the College of San Salvador, was also the author of some excellent poetry, and of a very valuable work on Cuban folk-lore. His views were altogether too advanced to suit the Government, and he

was considerably persecuted in consequence. He joined the insurrection under Cespedes, and was killed in the engagement off Bayanno in 1866. Among the minor poets of Havana may be mentioned Zequeira, Lecares, Palma, Mendira, and Pina.

In a country where the censorship weighs so heavily on the press, and on literature in general, as it does in Cuba, prose writers find little or no scope for their talent. Poetry, especially high class poetry, does not appeal to the masses so readily as prose, and being considered less dangerous is more leniently dealt with. Besides, it is generally published "for private circulation alone." Cuba has produced a few good local historians, among them the compiler of a work which has been of the greatest assistance to me in the historical portion of this book—*Los tres historiadores de la Isla de Cuba*—a collection of the chronicles of Herrera, Valdes, and Urietta, with copious notes and additions.

Although local journalism dates from the middle of the last century, the Cuban newspapers of the present day are of the flimsiest and most stupid description. They are even worse than those published in Constantinople, the censorship being, if anything, more childishly interfering than that of Abd'ul Hamid. Barring a few telegrams from Madrid and New York, the great political events in Europe and America are barely noticed at all. On the other hand, you will find plenty of information concerning the life of the calendar saint of the day, of St Rosa of Lima, for instance, or of the Blessed Filomena.

Although music is universally popular in Cuba, I know of no distinguished Cuban composer, musician, or vocalist. Yradié has collected and elaborated a number of Cuban popular airs, and Bizet has immortalised the Habanera in *Carmen*, but the first ten bars of that air are the only ones he has retained without alteration, though characteristic rhythm is well preserved. The less celebrated *Paloma*, by Yradié, is, I think, more genuinely Cuban. The negro melodies of the island are absolutely barbaric, and devoid of time and tune. They have nothing in common with the charming plantation airs of the Southern States of America.

Before leaving Santiago de Cuba we drove out to the celebrated Cobre Mines, some four hours distant from the city, but unfortunately there had been some accident on the previous day, and we were unable to descend into them. The scenery along the road, from Santiago, is magnificent. We went a little beyond the mines, and visited the shrine of Nuestra Señora de la Caridad de Cobre, a famous place of pilgrimage, which, however, has lost a good deal of its picturesque interest since the erection of the brand new church, large and garish, in which the holy image is enshrined. As it was not a *fiesta* there were very few pilgrims, and I, having seen many other like shrines in Europe, was much more interested in the enormous Caruba trees growing abundantly in the neighbourhood, which were hung with giant pods, a yard long, containing *casia*, a dark brown paste, which is made into a syrup, and said to be very beneficial in cases of sore throat. We

brought back a wonderful collection of pods and giant beans of all sorts, and some beautiful ferns and flowers, which I contrived to press as soon as I reached the hotel. However, before leaving Santiago I was presented with a large album containing a complete set of the ferns of the island. Among the commonest I noticed are our much prized gold and silver ferns, and some exquisite maiden-hairs, which, I am assured, have never been successfully transplanted. Whenever I turn over the pages of this album with its faded fern leaves, the memories of a delightful week spent in Santiago crowd into my mind, and I seem to see, as in a vision, the exquisite bay and the kindly denizens of the old City, built by Diego Velasquez, a good four hundred years ago.

The steamer which had brought us from Cienfuegos also took us to Nuevitas. The coast scenery is marvellously fine, and full of interest on account of its association with Columbus, who was familiar with every yard of it. We passed Baracoa, the oldest city in the island, with its picturesque, castle-crowned hill and its splendid mountain background.

Nuevitas is said to be the place where Columbus landed, though recent students think he really first stepped on shore at Carmello, in the neighbourhood of Havana. It is now the port of Puerto Principe, an important town some forty miles distant. The bay of Nuevitas is very fine, but we miss the lofty mountains of Santiago—this country being more or less flat, but very rich in vegetation, and beautifully green. Nuevitas does a good trade in sponges and

turtles, and is the depot for the shipment of sugar and molasses, this being a great cane country.

Puerto Principe itself is the counterpart of any other Cuban town. They are all exactly alike—the same narrow streets of one-storied, brightly-painted Pompeian-looking houses, the same wide Plaza with the same rococo church with its twin towers and flat dome, and the same formal Almeida full of tropical plants, where the people parade of a Sunday evening, to the strains of the local band. It is a fairly lively place, and is reported to be a well-known centre of rebellion.[1]

[1] The two other important Cuban cities which I did not visit are Cardenas, which is known as the American city, and which is situated immediately on the seaboard, and has a population of about 20,000 inhabitants, and Villa Clara, which is situated on Jagua Bay, a noble expanse of water which could easily accommodate and shelter half the fleets of Europe. Both these cities are remarkably well drained and prosperous, and give evidence at every turn that they are in the hands of an enterprising and energetic people. Between the two towns there must be between five and ten thousand residents, all of whom are engaged in commerce.

CHAPTER X.

Some Weird Stories.

No account of Cuba would be quite complete without some reference to the superstitious observances of the negro population, which have not failed to affect, by a kind of reflex action, the ideas and customs of the white inhabitants of the island.

The negroes have a smattering, of course, of Catholic teaching, and a tincture of the superstitions which affect the lowest order of Catholic mind. Superadded to these—or perhaps I should rather say, underlying them—we find a great mass of Voudistic legend and tradition, and a consequent observance and practice of those dark, weird, and blood-curdling mysteries known as the worship of Obi. The origin of this form of idolatry is lost in antiquity. It was known in ancient Egypt, where the serpent was called *Ob* or *Aub*. Traces of it appear even in Holy Writ. Moses charges the Israelites "not to inquire of the demon *Ob*"—described in the Vulgate as "divinator" and "sorcilegus." The Witch of Endor is called *Oub* or *Ob* in the original, and the word appears translated as *Pythonessa*, or Witch.

The African slaves imported their strange rites into

the West Indies when they were carried into slavery, and clung to them with all the tenacity of an oppressed and cruelly handled race.

The occult power possessed by the Obi man or woman is believed to be hereditary, but it rarely develops until the individual attains an advanced age. Fetish worship is a fundamental doctrine, and the Obi man has the power of causing the Obi, or evil spirit, to pass into any object he may select, such as the jaw-bone of a horse, or the body of a monkey. To these objects, living or dead, the worshippers offer fruit, fowls, and flowers. The ceremony of calling the spirit into its new abode is full of mystery and horror, and is generally performed at dead of night, and in some lonely and sequestered spot, far from Christian and profane eyes.

Many a curious story have I heard, of strange fate and cruel misfortune, connected with the dark practices of negro witchcraft. The following tale, which was related to me by a relative of the victim, will serve as an instance of Obi power. I need scarcely say I do not ask my readers to believe it, but I am quite sure my informant, by no means an uneducated man, placed the most implicit faith in every word he spoke.

A certain wealthy Cuban planter, whom I will call Don Pablo, once suspected an old negro in his service of being an Obi man. He had but recently returned to his estates, from a long sojourn in Europe, and was determined to suppress, so far as in him lay, the diabolical ceremonies which, his overseer assured him, were frequently performed by certain of the negroes on

his plantation, who had thus acquired a vast influence over their fellows. One night, Don Pablo followed his overseer into the forest, and reached a deserted hut, evidently used as a fetish temple, just as the rites began. He hid himself among the jungle, and watched his opportunity. The assemblage consisted of some twenty to thirty negroes, of both sexes, plentifully bedecked with beads, shells, and feathers, but otherwise stark naked. They opened proceedings by performing a sort of Pyrrhic dance, shouting as they whirled round and round, and brandishing their torches. Presently the door of the hut opened, and the Obi man appeared. He was very old, and quite greyheaded. His naked body was marked with white paint to represent a skeleton, and his appearance under the pale moonlight and the livid glow of the torches was weird beyond description. Don Pablo half wished himself at home —for, like all his race, he was both excitable and superstitious. In due time, the Obi man brought forward a huge toad, in which, after many ceremonies, he declared the Obi or fetish to be embodied. This done, he began to worship it, and to indulge in certain strange and obscene antics. Don Pablo, in his indignation, burst from his hiding-place, pistol in hand, commanding the Obi man to desist, and disperse the gathering, or take the consequences. To his surprise, the old priest utterly defied him, and boldly told him that if he persisted in disturbing the strange rites, the most fearful misfortunes would befall him. The audacious speech was answered by a ringing shot, which ended the Obi man's career, and broke up the meeting in

wild confusion. A few days afterwards, whilst Don Pablo sat at dinner, his wife fell suddenly forward and expired. In less than a fortnight his only daughter died, of some quickly developed and mysterious disease —probably poison. Broken-hearted and alarmed by these crushing blows, following in such swift and merciless succession, the unhappy man betook himself to a neighbouring plantation, and sought to propitiate the offended deity through another well-known and potent Obi man, but the attempt failed absolutely. The wizard declared he had no power to undo the mischief, for, he alleged, the deceased Obi man was far more influential with the spirits than himself. The miserable Don Pablo returned to his desolate home to find a letter announcing the death of his only son, who had been suddenly carried off in Paris, whither he had been sent for his education.

The number thirteen is considered an unlucky and even fatal one in Cuba. If you have a fever, the Obi man or woman will give you a little bag containing twelve seeds of garlic, which you put under your pillow, and in the morning you are sure to awake quite well,—unless, indeed, the witch has maliciously inserted a thirteenth seed, in which case you may as well order your coffin at once.

The evil eye is as prevalent as in Naples, and most houses are protected from it by a horseshoe, such as we often see, for the matter of that, in non-superstitious England! An Obi man or woman always has the evil eye—*mal de ojo*—and can do harm by mere force of will power, even if the object be many miles

removed. If you have incurred the Obi man's anger, your undertaking, whatever be its nature, is sure to fail; and on your return home, you may find your favourite child has been stung by a scorpion, or is dying of the fever, that your blacks are afflicted with some fell disease, and your herds stolen, or decimated.

Some Obi women are famous as prophetesses. There was a negro witch on the plantation of Doña Mary d'O——, an American lady, the widow of an exceedingly rich Cuban planter, and a most kindly and hospitable lady. One morning our hostess took us down to the negro quarters, to visit the dusky pythoness, whom we found sitting in the shade of some huge banana plants, smoking her cigarette. She rose to greet her mistress, and I was struck at once by her tall, commanding figure, and the stately manner in which she wore the long draperies of scarlet and white calico, which fell in ample folds (none of the freshest, I am forced to add) down to her feet. Her name was appropriate to her profession—Proserpina—Pina, for short. In answer to our greeting and inquiries after her health, Proserpina informed us she was well, but that owing to certain portents, she dreaded the near approach of some misfortune. Sure enough, very shortly afterwards, the *vomito nigro* appeared among the plantation hands, and many of them were swept away. Proserpina was a skilful palmist, and told us our future with a fair degree of success. She informed my fellow-traveller, and quite truly, that he would die within eight years, and assured me I should live to be very old and very rich. I

would fain hope the oracle may yet come true! "Pina" persistently refused to work, but her mistress, thinking it well to be on good terms with a personage so greatly looked up to by her fellows, allowed her to take her own way. She was in great demand among the plantation hands, in cases of sickness and childbirth, and she was not above accepting her fees, like any other lady doctor, exacted them, in fact, under threat of awful penalties. This venerable dame, like most of her profession, was an adept in the compounding of philtres and deadly poisons, the ingredients of which recall, in some cases, the uncanny mixtures prepared by the weird sisters in Macbeth—scorpion's blood six drops, the head of a toad, the belly of a snake, the poison of a black spider, and strange herbs gathered by moonlight. The whole mixed in a cauldron over a fire fed with dead men's bones, and boiled between midnight and dawn.

Every thoroughbred Cuban believes in ghosts and haunted houses. To this day certain plantations stand desolate, because nobody will face the spirits which haunt them—proof, if proof were needed, of the awful crimes committed within their walls. Before Tacon's time, such high roads as there were in the interior of the island were very unsafe, and gangs of banditti infested various parts of the country. They waylaid travellers, murdered them, and stripped their bodies. Many years ago a well-known lawyer at Porto Principe was arrested and charged with organising and financing a gang of *monteros* who had turned highwaymen, and killed and plundered various

wealthy travellers on their way to certain plantations in the interior. In the course of his trial it transpired that the bodies of the victims were buried under the kitchen floor of a wayside *fonda* (inn), the precise spots having been revealed to a negro seer by the ghosts of the slain. To this day, nobody will pass that *fonda* on All Souls Eve, because they are sure to see the spirits of the murdered men barring the road, and supplicating the passer-by to have a mass and *de profundis* offered for the repose of their unshriven souls.

Divers plantations have an evil reputation because negroes have been burnt there in days long gone by for practising the rites of Obi, or because their cruel masters desired to get rid of them, for reasons of their own. When the tempest is at its height, you may yet see, wandering among the palm trees, a black form wreathed in flames, whose wailing shriek rises even above the howling of the storm.

The superstitions of the blacks affected the whites: it could hardly be otherwise; for, however strong caste prejudice may be, the dominant race must absorb some proportion of the prejudices inherent in those who have nursed and waited on them in their tenderest and most impressionable years. Cases have occurred, and may occur even now, in which white men and women of the lowest class have joined in the strange and repellent rites of the African religion, if so it can be called. But I need hardly say that the more educated Cubans, though they admit the existence of a strange and mysterious faculty in certain of the negro priests and

priestesses, hold themselves utterly aloof from such demoniac and degrading practices.

Whilst we are on gruesome subjects, I may be excused if I take the opportunity of saying something about Cuban funeral customs, which have, however, been greatly modified of late years, in the large towns, owing to the advance of education, and to some slight improvement in the popular appreciation of hygiene. Twenty years ago, however (and even now, in the interior), the corpse used to be dressed up in its best clothes, the man in his frock-coat, white cravat, and patent-leather boots, the woman, if married, in her Sunday go-to-meeting best, or if she were a young girl, in white, with a wreath of flowers round her head. Thus arrayed, the body, after being exposed in a sort of lying in state in one of the principal apartments of the house, would be conveyed to the cemetery, with the lid of the coffin open, so that parents and friends might be able to admire the final toilette. This custom, which is still general among the Eastern orthodox Greeks, led in the course of time to the formation of a singular band of resurrectionists, who, after some wealthy person's funeral, were wont to steal away by night to the cemetery, dig up the body and despoil it of its fashionable garments, which constantly found their way to the second-hand clothiers. At present, among the educated classes, and in the large cities, the coffin lid is closed. But a compromise has been devised by the introduction of a plate-glass lid, through which the pleasing spectacle of the deceased lying at rest, bedecked with this world's finery, can be enjoyed without risk. A Cuban funeral pro-

cession is generally of very great length, and usually accompanied by a band of musicians, the town band for preference, playing operatic airs and even dance music. I once saw a young lady borne to her last home, her coffin covered with splendid wreaths, and surrounded by weeping friends, to the tune of the then popular Baccio waltz. Formerly, as in the East, men and women used to be hired as mourners, and being trained for the purpose, howled dismally enough to raise the dead. But they have been abolished, except in country places, where, in Cuba as elsewhere, old fashions die hard.

Among the guajiros, monteros, and poor whites generally,—and I believe also amongst the Catholic negroes,—a ceremony takes place on the night between the death and the funeral (which, by the way, always occurs within twenty-four hours), which bears a strong resemblance to an Irish wake: it is called a *velorio*; literally, watch or wake. The friends and relatives gather round the coffin, and spend the night watching by the body, which is placed in the centre of the chamber, the coffin being unclosed, covered with wreaths of flowers and bouquets, and flanked by six lighted candles. Originally this ceremony, like the Irish wake, was doubtless intended to be of a highly devotional character, but it has degenerated, by degrees, into a sort of orgie. A table covered with viands is set at one end of the room, and close to it stands another of still greater importance, bearing numerous bottles of aguardiente, gin, and wine. Frequent libations to the health of the departed soul soon produce their

effect, and the family begins to express its grief in the most uproarious manner, by dismal exclamations, hair-tearing, and breast-beating. They address the dead as if he were still living

"Ah! my poor darling," they say, "don't make any mistake. We are sorry indeed to lose you, but at present you see we are preparing the funeral baked meats for those who loved you less than we do. When they have all got their drinks, we will return, so don't be impatient. By and by we will howl dismally enough to please you." (*Luego te vamos gritar.*)

As the night wanes, and the aguardiente grows lower in the queer-looking bottles, the company can no longer restrain its grief. Everybody becomes inconsolable at once. When dawn comes, and with it the confraternities and the cura, to fetch the coffin, they not unfrequently find the company singing, dancing, and shouting as if possessed. And here I may observe that the Cubans can drink more aguardiente and gin, without showing any unsteadiness, than any other people on the face of the earth. They contrive to keep their legs at all events, though I am afraid they very frequently lose their heads.

Nothing more dismal can be imagined than a Cuban cemetery, which is usually located in the most arid spot in the neighbourhood of town or village. The Cubans never dream of planting a tree or a shrub near the graves of their lamented, for whom, by the way, they wear official mourning about six times as long as in any other country. At one extremity of the cemetery invariably stands the unpre-

tentious chapel. In the centre is the common field, where the poor and the coloured Catholics are buried,—no heretic being allowed to rest in this cheerless campo santo. The wealthier among the departed are commemorated by funereal monuments and slabs inserted in the wall surrounding the graveyard, which give their titles at full length, and most unstintingly commend their virtues.

In the cemetery of Santiago, which, by the way, is one of the dreariest fields of death I have ever beheld, there is a very interesting monument erected to the memory of the celebrated Doctor Antomarchi, who attended Napoleon I. at St Helena during his last illness. It is not remarkably artistic, but is sufficiently imposing to attract attention. I must say I felt greatly interested to learn why and wherefore Antomarchi elected to pass the last years of his life in Santiago de Cuba. This is the information I obtained concerning him. It seems that, shortly after the Emperor's death, he made a tour of the world, in search of a missing brother, whom he had not seen or heard of for many years. Chance threw them together in the streets of Santiago, and Antomarchi determined to take up his abode in the same town as the only other surviving member of his family. As he had a considerable fortune, he took handsome apartments in one of the best streets of the city, set up as oculist, and received patients for eye diseases, in the treatment of which he seems to have been fairly successful. He often spoke of his illustrious patient, and described his last hours. Dr Antomarchi was a generous man and

charitable to the poor; and although he only lived a few years at Santiago, where he fell a victim to the yellow fever in 1826, he was so greatly esteemed that this monument was erected to his memory by public subscription.

The friend with whom I was travelling was, like myself, an ardent admirer of Napoleon, and ordered a magnificent wreath to be placed on the tomb of the man who closed the great Emperor's eyes, and who, like his imperial master, was destined to end his days in a tropical island.

In these Cuban cemeteries you may occasionally notice certain large land crabs sidling along with a lazy air, as if they had had an exceedingly good dinner. All I will say anent them is, that they are often suspiciously covered with earth, and that I would not eat one of them to save my life. The negroes, however, declare them to be of exquisite flavour.

CHAPTER XI.

Plantation Life.

It is only by visiting two or three of the great plantations, of various kinds, that one can form any idea, not only of the agricultural wealth of the island, but of the extraordinary beauty of its flora.

There are plantations and plantations in Cuba, just as there are country houses and country houses in England: some (I am speaking of the island before the present rebellion) are magnificent; others are distinctly rough and tumbledown. The first sugar plantation I had the pleasure of visiting was situated some miles from Havana, and belonged to an American gentleman. The approach to the family residence (*casa de vivienda*) was through handsome iron gates and an apparently interminable avenue of magnificent Royal palms, which, by the way, although they produced a most imposing effect, on account of the exceeding height of the vault of deep green foliage, suspended some eighty to ninety feet above our heads, afforded little or no shade, for their superb trunks are as straight as darts, and as smooth as so many greased poles at an old-fashioned English country fair.

In front of the very large one-storied house was an open space, converted into a garden by our charming

hostess, a Bostonian lady, devoted to floriculture. It was, I remember, conspicuous for the number of its immense bushes of flaming hibiscus, then in full and glorious bloom. Hiding modestly in the shade were some homely pale pink roses, which had been imported from New England, and which, I was assured, required the greatest possible care. Their sweetness seemed not a little overpowered by their gorgeous and sturdy rivals, whose vivid flowers were as large as the crown of my Panama hat. The drive up to the house was fenced in by perfect walls of orange trees, whose strongly scented starlike blossoms mingled with the ripe and golden fruit. On either side of the door were the finest banana plants I have ever seen, their velvety leaves being fully ten to fifteen feet in length. At the door stood our host and hostess, eager to welcome us with true American cordiality. Mr G—— insisted upon our taking a cocktail there and then, and a most refreshing and grateful beverage it proved to be, after our long and dusty drive. The hall of this *hacienda*, an enormous apartment, with a highly polished floor, served also for drawing-room and place of general meeting. It was most beautifully furnished, and at every turn the careful supervision of a woman of culture was evident.

Here were immense Chinese vases full of fresh cut flowers, trailing boughs of the golden trumpet vine, huge bunches of the peacock acacia, and other specimens of brilliant tropical bloom, such as my eyes had never rested on before.

"Ah," said our hostess, "you see I always have cut flowers in my rooms, but you will never find them in the house of any Spaniard or Cuban. Even the negroes seem to object to them, and are apt to throw them away as soon as my back is turned. But what I want you to notice, whilst they are getting breakfast ready for us, are some mantis which we caught this morning in the garden;" and here the lady brought forward a box with a glass lid, containing apparently four or five beautiful green leaves, about the size and shape of a poplar leaf. But they were living insects, so cunningly formed by Nature that even the birds disdain to touch them, be they ever so hungry, fully believing them to be tasteless castaway foliage. The manti family is largely represented throughout the whole of the West Indies, from the sly gentleman who looks like a piece of broken brown stick, some four or five inches in length, to the pale green leaf we had just admired, and to yet another species which has all the appearance, and even the indentures and veining, of an autumn-tinted oak leaf, and which, moreover, the better to deceive its enemies, flutters to the ground exactly as if the wind had detached it from the bough of some tall tree.

Everywhere in this fine *hacienda*, all that wealth could procure to increase comfort had been introduced by a lavish and tasteful hand. The lofty bedrooms, I remember, were deliciously clean and airy, and the brass bedsteads—a real luxury in the tropics—were surrounded by the whitest and most impenetrable

of mosquito netting. The coloured servants, too, looked sleek and happy, and spotless, in their snowy liveries.

Our host informed us that although since the emancipation of the slaves he paid his ex-slaves a weekly wage, he had purposely kept up the numerous institutions in connection with the plantation which were universal in the slave days, but which many of the native planters had latterly dispensed with, much to the inconvenience and regret of the poor black people, now left, with little or no experience, to their own devices. There was a sort of hospital on this estate, where the sick were looked after, and a nursery, in which the little black gentry were screened from the blazing sun, and carefully watched over by several old ebony and mahogany-tinted ladies deputed for the purpose. At certain hours of the day the mothers were allowed to tend their little ones, and to pass with them a half-hour or so of that supreme bliss which is so dear to every mother's heart.

After a well served and most enjoyable luncheon, and a cigarette, we sallied forth to see the sights of the place.

A sugar-cane field does not present a particularly inviting appearance, not more so than the ordinary cane jungles you so frequently come across in the Genoese Riviera. When green it is pretty enough; but ripe, it has a distinctly disorderly appearance, and is not to be compared with an English wheat field in the golden month of August.

There are two sorts of cane: the *criolla* or native cane, which, I was told, was first imported from the Canaries by Columbus on his second voyage. It is considered the least excellent in quality, and is not largely cultivated by the planters. They leave it to the negroes, who consume vast quantities of molasses —when they get the chance. The *Otahite* is the finest cane. It is very thick, and grows to a height of from six to sixteen feet. As in the case of all the cane family, the stem is divided into angular joints, which vary in length as the cane tapers upwards. The moist, soft pith contains the sweet juice, which, when pressed out by machinery, is converted into sugar. The sugar harvest commences late in January, and ends in May, the planting season taking place during the breaks in the wet season, which lasts from June to the end of November. The cane is not grown from seed, as is generally stated, but from slips taken from the top of the plant, the lower leaves of which are stripped off. When stuck in the ground at regular intervals, to a depth of about two inches, the cane slips soon take root, and in about six months grow to maturity, sometimes, but very rarely, attaining a height of twenty feet.

The field we first visited was a very large one, the ripe canes, of a pale green turning to grey, undulating over it to a considerable distance. There must have been some thirty or forty men, women, and children working in this plot, under the supervision of a mounted overseer. The men cut the cane with a small hatchet, the women gathered it together and tied it into bundles,

whilst some of the negroes and most of the children peeled off the leaves, which are good for fodder, or hoisted it on to the high-wheeled carts, each drawn by four prodigiously long-horned oxen, of the breed so dear to the Roman art student.

The sky above was hazy, almost an English grey, and everything was subdued to its tone, whereby for once we avoided that glare which, in warm climates, so often destroys the effect of those soft and fleeting tints of "middle distance." Some dozen carts piled with the silver-grey canes filed off in a slow procession down the white-sanded road towards the *hacienda*, the noble-looking oxen occasionally lifting their heads to give vent to their feelings, and express their opinion of things in general, by a prolonged bellow. Each team was led by a negro, with a wide straw hat on his head, and wearing only a pair of white drawers. Bobbing up and down among the uncut canes we could see the bright turbans of the negresses, and occasionally a little ebony imp would turn an impossible somersault right in front of us, and then drop on his knees in the expectation, promptly realised, of a liberal donation, as the price of his queer antic.

The carts take the cane to the mill, where they are unloaded, and where huge wheels, worked by steam, or latterly by electricity, press the sugar out of them,—the engine never ceasing its evolutions night or day. In the old times, the negroes were worked, as I have elsewhere stated, as many as nineteen and even twenty hours a day, at this, to them, terrible season. Even now, their hours are very long, but they are at liberty

to strike for higher wages if they choose, and I am assured they very often do so.

It is very interesting to watch the cane being thrown into the mill, and to observe the great wheels whirling round and round, while the continuous river of pale green syrup flows into its wooden trough-like receptacles, whence it is taken in buckets to the furnaces to be clarified. In its first state it soon turns acid, and consequently has to be boiled and clarified immediately, or else it would be ruined; and this is one of the principal reasons why there is such a press of work during the sugar harvest. It cannot be neglected for a single hour, and relays of hands have to relieve each other constantly, rest being impossible, even on the Sabbath. The juice, after being boiled and clarified, is filtered through vats, which, up to the rim, are filled with bone black and changed every six or eight hours, until the juice turns colour. According to the punctuality and skill with which the bone black is changed, so does the quality of the sugar increase in excellence. This apparently simple process is one of the chief expenses, as well as one of the subtlest arts, of sugar-making. Once clarified, the sugar goes through a variety of mechanical processes—very absorbing to the spectator, but not particularly so to the reader,—until it is eventually converted into moist sugar. Some portion, however, is retained, and sold as molasses, and golden syrup. When duly prepared for exportation, it is tightly packed in wooden cases, which are sealed up and strapped with slips of raw hide, ready for market.

Our first evening on this plantation was delightfully spent. After dinner,—which, by the way, was served as it would have been in an English country house, everybody being in full evening dress,—we had some excellent music. A young Cuban lady and gentleman entertained us by singing some of the national airs, as arranged by Yradié. The lady sang with great spirit, and her rendering of *la Paloma* and of the *Habanera* from Carmen was simply perfect. I have never heard the latter song sung with greater spirit, except by the famous Madame Calvé. Then two negro musicians were ordered to appear and give us a sample of their skill. One of the men, who evidently belonged to some very black and fierce Kaffir tribe, had a melodious baritone voice, and sang several African melodies, which were recalled to my memory some years afterwards, by some of the music so dear to the Asiatics of Constantinople, which is of the same nasal and twangy description, with endless cadences, and a certain absence of tune, which should win the approval of all faithful Wagnerians.

As the night was exceedingly clear, before retiring to rest we went for a stroll in the gardens. It was my first experience of the transcendent beauties of a full moon in the tropics. Even the glories of an Italian moonlight must fade before such radiance as I now admired. The light shed by this southern "orb of night" was almost as golden as that of the sun, and yet the shadows remained quite dark; hence a vigorous contrast of light and shade, such as I have never seen elsewhere. The effect as we passed under the long

avenue of palm trees was most striking. We might have been in the nave of some giant Gothic cathedral, —its columns were represented by the grey stems of the towering Royal palms, whose interlaced foliage, high above our heads, suggested the wonderful roof of Henry VII.'s chapel at Westminster. Some of the hedgerows in the garden were quite white with the "moon flower," a sort of snowy night-blooming convolvulus, the flowers of which are of immense size, and as flat and thin as a sheet of paper. This flower is an annual; several of its seeds which I carried back with me to England have succeeded very well.

The next sugar plantation we visited was near Matanzas; but although I saw several other sugar estates, they did not particularly interest me, as they were, though perhaps on a larger scale, almost exactly like the first we had inspected. I was, however, delighted with my first coffee plantation: I shall not easily forget its fresh beauty and delightful odour. The coffee berry was introduced into Cuba from Hayti, in 1742, and has flourished greatly, but the trade has of late considerably diminished in importance. Nothing can exceed the beauty of a coffee field. The plants are grown from seed, and are planted in rows sometimes covering a thousand acres. To screen the shrubs from the prodigious heat, they are carefully protected by other plants, such as the banana and the pomegranate tree, under whose shade the shrubs grow freely. Very often the cocoa plant is grown on the same plantation as the coffee shrub. There are three kinds of chocolate-producing plants—the caracas, the

pods of which are red; the guayaquil, which bears purple pods, whereas those of the criolla are yellow. The tree is not pretty: it looks too much like a small stunted pear-tree, and the fruit grows in a very odd manner, not in clusters among the leaves, but along the trunk, from the ground upwards, the seeds being protected by thick, heavy pods, which, sticking out as they do at regular intervals, produce a most whimsical appearance. The fruit is ripe for gathering between June and December, at about the same time as the coffee, the blossoms of which are in full glory early in February, —distinctly the best month in which to visit a coffee estate, and enjoy its loveliness to the full.

The *hacienda* to which the plantation I first visited was attached, belonged to a Cuban gentleman, and was a great contrast to the finely-appointed mansion we had recently left. There was no garden, and the front door was usually encumbered by a noisy group of stark-naked little darkies of both sexes, whom we generally caught tormenting some queer-looking animal which they had caught in the fields—a land tortoise or a baby iguana. They were always sprawling between our feet, but though they sometimes got more kicks than ha'pence, they seemed perfectly happy, and as jolly as sandboys. The entrance-hall was occupied by a double row of rocking-chairs, and by a large deal table, on which our breakfast and dinner were served, invariably without tablecloth or napkins. There were, however, any number of looking-glasses, gorgeous French clocks, artificial flowers under glass shades, and stupendous bronze lamps, such as you buy at the

Louvre or the Bon Marché, by way of works of art; there was a collection of framed but extremely primitive chromos, representing scenes in the life of the Blessed Virgin, and others in gay Parisian life, as it appeared at Mabile and at the Bal de l'Opera, in the golden days of Müger. No books or newspapers were anywhere to be seen; on the other hand, there was a plentiful supply of playing-cards and dominoes, with which we contrived to amuse ourselves during the evening, or, as I ought rather to say, throughout the night, for nobody dreamt of going to bed till two o'clock in the morning. The planter was a very hospitable man, who gave us the best of wines, and we had several very palatable Cuban dishes, the dinner always winding up with the inevitable roast sucking-pig, strongly flavoured with garlic. The Señora was a very stout lady of forty, who lolled about the house all day long in an old red flannel dressing-gown: when she was not rocking in a chair, she was swinging in a hammock, with four or five negresses in attendance on her. They all seemed on the best of terms, but as they spoke patois, I could not understand their jokes, possibly made at our expense, for they used to look at us slyly, and then burst into roars of ill-suppressed laughter. Be that as it may, the Señora was a very different personage in the evening from the rather disorderly-looking, middle-aged female, without shoes and stockings, who was so busy doing nothing all day long. By supper-time she was gorgeous, dressed up in the very latest of Parisian toilettes, her magnificent glossy black hair carefully dressed, her podgy fingers

blazing with diamond rings, and her face so thickly coated with rice flour that you could scarcely distinguish her features, except her lips, which were painted cherry red, and her eyebrows, which were artificially arched. She had a rather pretty daughter, called Dolores, who spent her days much after her mother's fashion. There was yet another daughter, at a convent in Havana, and a third, about seven years of age, who played with the little niggers on the doorstep. There was a really fine grand piano in one corner of the room, every single note of which was out of tune, and on this delightful instrument the Señorita and a long, thin young German, whose exact position in the family I never could define,—I think he must have been the agent's son,—played airs from Luisa Miller, Ernani, and other pre-historic operas, systematically disarranged for the piano, for four hands, by a certain Signor Campara. They were exceedingly proud of their performance, and, once started, there was no possibility of stopping them until the cards were produced. Then they flew to the table and took a most active interest in a game at "Nap," at which I lost a considerable sum of money the first night, and won it back again the second, to the Señora's extreme and evident annoyance.

The most extraordinary part about this house was that there were no single bedrooms. They were replaced by two dormitories on opposite sides of the the house, one for gentlemen and one for ladies. It was all very odd and amusing, but the hospitality was unbounded. On the last evening of our stay a

baile or dance was given in our honour, to which some of the neighbours came, and danced the *creola*, and a very elaborate country-dance in which I was forced to join. I am afraid I did not acquit myself with much grace, for I was perpetually mistaking the figures, which provoked much laughter. The ball ended at about two o'clock in the morning, and most of the company went home on horseback, after a supper at which no less than four infant pigs were consumed. I never saw such a people as the Cubans for pork and sucking-pig,—about the very last dish I should have expected to have come across in those latitudes. We took leave of our friends with no little regret, for though they were primitive and very superficially educated people, their manners were excellent, most courteous, kindly, and well-bred. The Señora, however, could never keep herself from laughing at our Spanish, and at the evident reluctance with which we endeavoured to make believe we enjoyed certain impossible dishes,—a roast iguana among the number. I did overcome my repugnance to partaking of so unpleasant-looking a reptile, and found it tasted exactly like tough roast chicken.

Whilst we were staying with this amiable family we were initiated into the mysteries of guava jelly-making by a tall mulatress, who acted as cook to the establishment, and who was evidently held in great respect by every member of the community, especially by the darksome urchins, who, although they haunted her kitchen in the hope of purloining titbits, constantly received sharp raps on their woolly pates, from a

prodigiously long iron spoon. There was no very great mystery about the guava jelly,—the process is exactly like that of compounding any other fruit-jelly ; and as to the paste or cheese, I think that between the making of it and damson cheese there is only the difference which exists between Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee. However, I frankly admit my devotion to guava paste. And as to the jelly,—the Easterns say we may hope to enjoy in the next world those things which we like best to eat in this,—therefore pray I, that when I shuffle off this mortal coil, I need not relinquish all hope of an occasional treat of guava jelly!

A sketch of Cuba which contained no mention of tobacco would be very much like "Hamlet" without the Prince of Denmark. The name of the dusky chief whom Christopher Columbus found inhaling the fragrant leaf of the *tabaco*, as he called it, should have lived even to our days. But, like that of many another unknown hero, his title is unrecorded, and probably neither Columbus nor his savage friend ever imagined the prodigious results that were to grow out of the conversation, in the course of which the Indian instructed the discoverer of the New World as to the value and properties of the strange weed, the soothing properties of which he seemed so greatly to enjoy. Little did they foresee that within a hundred years a Mahommedan Kaliph and a Christian Pope were both to fulminate excommunication against such of their followers as ventured to indulge a taste they deemed unworthy and unclean.

The aboriginal Indians did not smoke tobacco after our present fashion. They inhaled the fumes through a forked cane, the two prongs of which they applied to their nostrils, whilst the longer end was plunged among the burning leaves. Such implements are still used, I am assured, by the negroes in Cuba, and elsewhere, when they desire to forget their sorrows in the dreamy sleep thus artificially produced.

Like the vine, tobacco depends for its quality on certain peculiarities of soil and climatic influences, which have hitherto baffled investigation. Thus the Cuban tobacco grown in the Vuelta Abajo district is the finest in the world; and, though the plant grows luxuriantly in other parts of the island,—as at San Juan dos Remedeos and at Rematos,—its quality never attains the perfection of that which ripens in the immense fertile plain which extends westward from Havana. This part of Cuba is known as the Vuelta Abajo, or "lower valley," in contradistinction to the upper end of the island called Vuelta Arriba, or "higher valley." Fortunately for the tourist, the best tobacco plantations in the island are within an easy journey from the capital, and close to a village called Guanajay, some twelve miles from the sea, and accessible by train. It is situated in the midst of very pretty scenery, of an essentially sylvan character, the numerous tobacco fields being dotted with magnificent palms and tropical trees. Few tobacco plantations exceed a size of thirty acres. Each is provided, as a rule, with a dwelling-house, some cattle-sheds, and a few drying-houses. The processes of growing and preparing the plant are

of the simplest character, and do not require any special machinery. The tobacco is not sown in the open field, but in small prepared plots, whence the seedlings are transplanted when they are a few inches high, and set out at regular distances in the fields. The Nicotiana,—now common in most English gardens,—grows taller in Cuba than in this country, usually reaching a height of from 6 to 8 feet. Each plant is carefully tended until it is ready for harvesting. All superfluous and ill-shaped leaves must be removed, and the greatest care taken to protect the plants from the *vivijagua*, a very large and malicious ant, which is quite capable of destroying a whole crop within a few hours. The field hands employed in this cultivation are almost all blacks, who possess an instinctive knowledge of the needs of each plant, and gather the leaves with an astonishing delicacy of touch, and absence of over-handling. When the harvesting and curing time arrives, the leaves are gathered into bundles of from thirty to forty each, for the best, and from twenty to thirty, for the second quality.[1] Some eighty to a hundred of these bundles, when pressed and tied together, form a tercio or bale, weighing about 200 lbs., in which form the tobacco is transported, on muleback, to Havana. A tobacco plantation is a very pretty sight, and the fragrance is delightful, for a certain number of plants in each plot are allowed to flower for seeding purposes. The sowing-time lasts from June

[1] Those who wish to obtain a more perfect knowledge of tobacco and its cultivation will do well to read the two exhaustive chapters on the subject, in "Cuba with Pen and Pencil," by Samuel Hazzard, by far the best book ever written on Cuba.

to October; the harvest begins in December and goes on till May.

Some idea of the importance of the tobacco trade is conveyed by the fact that one hundred million cigars, valued at about two million sterling, are annually imported into England alone. The earliest shipments take place in June and July, and are mostly sold to Germany; the British market being supplied in October and November, when the tobacco is thoroughly mellowed.

Almost all the Cuban tobacco planters are Spaniards, and the trade, with few exceptions, is entirely in their hands. Two great foreign firms, however, stand out prominently. The first, that of Messrs Bock & Co., is English, and world renowned; the second is German, Messrs Behrens & Co., who are the owners of the cigar connoisseur's latest "pet," the brand "Sol." With hardly any exception, all the other brands of any renown —the Flor de Cuba, Corona, Villa y Villa, Flor de J. S. Murias, Pedro Murias—are in the hands of the Spaniards. It is a curious fact that hitherto no American firm has risen to exceptional renown among the cigar manufacturers of the world, although the neighbouring isle of Key West has lately sprung into prominence as a tobacco land of much promise, and several important firms have been established there with a fair measure of success. The true Havana cigar is made in Havana only. Some of the large firms, such as Bock & Co., employ from three to five thousand hands, almost all Spaniards and Cubans, white labour being preferred, on account of the delicate processes

through which the tobacco has to pass before it is converted into a cigar. Although there are certainly more than a hundred cigar manufacturers in Havana, only two or three of the factories are really worth visiting. The *Corona* is perhaps the most striking, because it is located in what was until quite recently the gorgeous palace of the Aldama family, in the Campo Marte. The magnificent marble staircases and saloons, with their splendidly frescoed ceilings, are now turned "to viler purposes," the tesselated pavements are trodden by the *zapatos* of the cigar makers, and the Court of Olympus, in the vaulted roof of the state ballroom, looks down upon busy groups of tobacco sorters and cigar makers. Each cigar maker sits before a low table. He begins operations by taking the tobacco leaf and spreading it smoothly before him. Then he cuts out certain hard fibres which might interfere with the shape of the cigar. Next he rolls up the leaf into the correct shape, and if he be a skilful workman he will do this without further recourse to knife or scissors. The cigars vary in length according to the brand: they were made much longer formerly than they are at present. Some used to measure eight inches, but now four inches is the most usual length. Prices vary from thirty to one thousand dollars per thousand cigars.

No women are employed in the manufacture except for arranging the cigars in boxes and pasting down the lids with their well-known and brilliantly printed labels. The boxes, which are made of cedar wood, form another important branch of Havanese industry. The Cubans themselves never smoke cigars: they all

use cigarettes, which most of them make and roll, with a delicacy and grace peculiar to themselves. It is somewhat remarkable that although the Cubans literally live with a cigarette between their lips—they begin smoking the first thing in the morning, and continue until they go to bed—they seem absolutely impervious to any form of nicotine poisoning. May not its prevalence in European countries be the result of smoking inferior and dirty tobacco? I was much struck, when visiting the various tobacco factories in Havana, with the scrupulous cleanliness everywhere observed. The cigar makers are obliged to wash their hands constantly all through the day, and no dust or dirt is tolerated anywhere.

CHAPTER XII.

An Isle of June—A Contrast.

It was early on a bright winter morning that our good ship "San Jacinto" steamed into the harbour of Nassau, the capital of New Providence. As I leaned over the side and looked down into the waters over which our vessel moved, I could scarcely believe my eyes. It seemed impossible that water deep enough to float the ship should be so marvellously clear. We appeared to be gliding over a sheet of sea-green crystal. Not a pebble, bit of sponge, shell, fish, crab, or coral, but was distinctly visible, as if but a few inches below the surface. It was like floating in ether, for the glint of shimmering sunlight alone proved it was fluid. But water it was, and nothing else, for, as we neared the wharf, a score or so of dusky forms splashed into the briny mirror, breaking up its glassy surface, sent a spray of diamonds into the air, and then dived into its pellucid depths in quest of coppers liberally scattered by the amused passengers. "Please, Boss, deeve (give) us a small dive," was the entreaty shouted by a good dozen or so of dusky urchins, who, on the least encouragement, jerked off their coats and shirts and plunged into the sea. Sometimes they caught the

coin before it touched the bottom, at others the diver remained quite a time searching for his prize, looking, as seen from above, with his wriggling arms and legs, like a huge black spider.

When Christopher Columbus landed on the shores of "Guanahanè," on October 17th, 1492, and named the present island of New Providence San Salvador, he wrote a letter to the Spanish Sovereigns, full of his usual expressions of delighted enthusiasm. "The loveliness," says he, "of this island is like unto that of the Campaña de Cordoba. The trees are all covered with ever-verdant foliage, and perpetually laden with flowers or fruit. The plants in the ground are full of blossom. The breezes are like those of April in Castille." Due allowance made for the exaggeration of an explorer, in love with the treasure he has found, it must still be confessed that his words, all glowing as they are, scarcely overpraise the charm of the peaceful scenery which so stirred his poetic ardour. For truly the Bahamas are islands like unto that chosen by Shakespeare for the scene of the "Tempest,"—

"Full of infinite delight."

New Providence is about twenty miles long by seven in breadth, and is the most important, though by no means the biggest, of the Bahama group, which numbers over 600 islands and cays, and contains some 45,000 inhabitants, of whom 20,000 reside in Nassau and its neighbourhood.

The history of the island since its discovery by Columbus, down through the Buccaneer period, is

only interesting to its government and inhabitants. However dark may be the memories of its old pirate days, it is now a remarkably respectable place, not even a murder having thrown a shadow during the past twenty-five years on its nearly untarnished reputation. It would be difficult to imagine a quieter spot. On Sundays, especially, is it peaceful, when not only all the shops, but the majority of the house-shutters also, are closed, and the tranquil air is laden with church music of the most sober and orthodox description.

The impression produced upon the tourist arriving from Cuba is very striking, for it brings the different influences of the Spanish and the Anglo-Saxon races, upon the negroes, into vivid contrast. Personal observation only can, as I have already said, give any idea of the filth of the dwellings of the lower classes of Cubans, and especially of the blacks. The coloured folk of Nassau are, generally speaking, clean and tidy. Most of the Cuban towns are more or less squalid. The city of Nassau is, if anything, too prim, and its inhabitants are models of order both in their dress and habits. A glance reveals the fact that the coloured people here have been disciplined and trained by a race which is as certainly superior to the Spanish, in all that concerns practicality and common sense, as it is inferior to it in natural artistic instinct. I never saw anything —no, not even in the Whitechapel and Drury Lane districts of London—to surpass the unutterable disorder and general abomination of the interiors of the Cuban cottages. But as you pass along the roads at

Nassau, and glance into the windows of the negroes' cottages, you will almost invariably see tidy interiors worthy of the brush of a Teniers or a David Wilkie ; a floor on which you could eat your dinner ; walls neatly papered with framed chromos symmetrically arranged upon them ; spotless curtains ; shining brass lamps and cooking utensils, and a bed covered with a counterpane as white as driven snow. If you peep in at meal times you will note a clean cloth covered with orderly-arranged plates and dishes. I am speaking of the dwellings of the negroes, of those self-same coloured people who, in the same climate, only a day and a half's journey away, in Cuba, dwell, under another race and civilization, in a condition too nasty to be described here.

Straws show how the wind blows. I saw a poor coloured woman, the day after I arrived in Nassau, soundly box her little girl's ears because she appeared in public with a few fluffs of cotton sticking in her wool. The ordinary afternoon occupation of the coloured ladies in Havana is to sit in the shade of the big plantain leaves, picking something rather more animated than cotton fluffs off each other's heads. The Cuban negresses dress flaringly. They trail a yard of skirt behind them in the dust, cover their shoulders with a vivid embroidered China crape scarf, and deck their heads with a mantilla. The effect is picturesque enough, but look down at their ankles, and you will soon perceive untidy petticoats and shoeless feet. The coloured girls at Nassau are remarkably neat and clean, especially on Sundays. The influence

of the Sunday school teacher, preaching, and not in the desert, the gospel of those four great evangelists, soap and water, comb and brush, is everywhere manifest, even to the detriment of the picturesque.

As you drive through Grant's Town, the negro quarter of Nassau, you see so much to gladden you that it does more real good to an invalid than many a cunningly-prepared draught. Charmingly picturesque wooden huts, thatched with palmetto, and as neat as you please, overshadowed by cocoa-nut-trees and exquisite flowering creepers, border either side of the road. On the thresholds are laughing groups of women and children of every shade of black, mahogany, and "yullar." Then, when the shades of evening grow long and deep in the thickets of the banyan-trees, coloured Pyramus courts coloured Thisbe over the garden wall, and the roads swarm with little darkies, romping, laughing, and chasing each other round and about, whilst neatly-dressed women, standing at their doors, or leaning out of their open windows, watch the return of their "men," as they boldly call their husbands. The air is still and laden with the penetrating perfume of the stephanotis, the white blossoms of which gleam like stars amidst the dark foliage, and of the crimson and pink oleander, which flowers here to great perfection. It is difficult to imagine a more peaceful scene — the cheerful sounds of greeting, the merry chatter of the negroes, the tuning of the banjoes, whilst overhead the beautiful sunset-lit clouds shed rosy tints abroad, and set forth in bold relief the tall stems of the waving palms and of

the strange-named trees, whose bizarre foliage arouses wonderment, and between whose gnarled boughs we catch glimpses of the high-roofed houses of the city, of the cathedral spire, and of a sea blue as a turquoise, now shivering beneath the gentlest of breezes.

The town of Nassau itself is not particularly interesting, inasmuch that, with the sole exception of the cathedral, it cannot boast of a single monument of artistic importance. The houses, mostly built of stone, faced with wood, have high slated roofs and wide verandahs, which surround each storey, and afford some shade during the sunny hours of the day. The public buildings are clean, but unpretentious, and evidently modelled after those of some English county town, in which the sturdy Georgian architecture predominates. There are few traces, anywhere, of the influence of the higher art, although the cathedral itself is a fairly handsome Gothic building, wherein the services of the Church of England are admirably conducted.

The gardens are trim and pretty, but, notwithstanding their profusion of tropical plants, they lack the luxuriant charm which renders the ill-kept gardens of Havana so romantic and picturesque. Very few of the gardens belonging to private houses are of great size, and even Government House is a modest-looking dwelling, erected on the highest of the surrounding hills, and commanding a fine view of the town and harbour.

The chief monument of Nassau is not one built by hand, but a silk-cotton-tree, planted, some two hundred

years ago, by one John Miller, Esq., opposite the present "public buildings." It is a stupendous tree of Titanic proportions. The roots, unable to find their way down through the rocky soil, swell up like buttresses, radiating round the trunk some fifteen yards, and, rising six and eight feet from the ground, form part of the actual bulk of the tree, and give the huge veteran the appearance of a web-footed monster, standing in solemn reverie. Amongst the gnarled and weird-looking roots are ravines, in whose dark hollows a legion of elves might dwell and hold their revels. High above this root-work spreads a canopy of leaves of the most exquisite, tender green. Singular to say, the gigantic growth flattens at the top, and is nearly squared off in correspondence with the aspect the paucity of earth has forced the roots to assume. Had Shakespeare seen this mighty monster,—which travellers from California declare to be even more imposing than any of the Mammoth trees,—he would have immortalised it in a few grand lines, or made it the background of some quaint fairy scene, the home of another Herne the Hunter, Oberon and Titania, Ariel, or Puck. There are several other fine silk-cotton-trees on the island, and in Cuba this tree grows to perfection, but the specimen I have attempted to describe is universally acknowledged to be the finest known. I was much surprised to notice the rapidity with which the silk-cotton tree burst into leaf. On my arrival I noticed one in the grounds of the hotel which seemed to be dead. The rest were green, but this one was quite barren. In three days it was lost to sight, hidden in its own

foliage, developed within the space of two nights. The silk-cotton-tree is so called because it bears a pod full of flossy silk, which is used instead of down for pillow cases, but the fibres are too short to be woven.

Nassau and its neighbourhood are really not unlike an open-air museum of botanical and marine curiosities. As you drive, or walk, through the woods and lanes, your attention is constantly attracted to some tree or shrub remarkable for its curious shape, leaves, and flowers. If you ask its name you will be told it is either the gum-arabic-tree, the guava, the banyan, the ipicac, the pimento, the spice, the cinnamon, the pepper, the caper, the castor-oil, or, in short, any one of half the plants which stock our drug or grocery shops. One day I noticed an onion-like-looking plant, with somewhat curious leaves, and asked its name. It turned out to be my old acquaintance "squills," of syrup-fame. Lady Blake, who is not only a distinguished artist, but an exceptionally learned botanist, has executed a complete series of exquisite drawings of the flora of the Bahamas. It would be difficult to overpraise the artistic, as well as the scientific value of this collection, exhibited in the Bahama Court of the Colonial Exhibition of 1886. During the Governorship of her husband, Sir Henry Blake, Lady Blake rendered a like service to the flora of Jamaica.

The cocoa-nut tree is a recent introduction into the Bahamas. Forty years back there were few in the whole island of New Providence. The orange-tree is indigenous to the island, and there is other fruit of ex-

ceedingly fine quality. A very extraordinary fact about the local vegetation is, that the roots are entirely exposed. The island is of coral formation, and only very lightly covered with earth; but such is the abundance of the dews, and so great the fertilising quality of the atmosphere, that a plant with one or two feelers caught in the pores of the coraline rock will grow and flourish. There are big trees with all their roots, save one, above ground. Some trees may be noticed growing astride the public walks, with one half of their roots on one side and the rest on the other. The immense amount of decayed animal matter in the coraline makes it one of the richest of soils, and the heavy dews which fall immediately after sunset, and of which I shall speak presently, increase its fertility. A number of "air-plants" grow in the woods, and of course derive their nourishment entirely from the abundant dews. These curious plants are, for the most part, a species of wild pine. One of the most remarkable of them is the "green snake," which looks exactly like a long serpent. The common life-plant of the tropics grows everywhere, and, together with the air-plants, rouses much curiosity among visitors from Europe and North America. If you take one of its thick, waxy leaves, and hang it on a nail, it will live for months, and shoot forth others without needing either water or earth.

The useful sizel plant — a fibrous hemp yielding aloe—of great commercial value, is now extensively cultivated, and with excellent results. Great impetus was given to its culture by Sir Ambrose Shea during his prolonged and popular Governorship.

The scenery round Nassau is of pancake flatness, and uninteresting, except close to the town, where there are some little hills of inconsiderable height, which might vie in altitude with a certain Mount Cornelia near St Augustine, Florida, advertised as one of the attractions of a watering-place called Mount George, because it is ninety feet high. Verily a dwarf is a giant amongst pigmies, and Mount Cornelia is a Mount Blanc in flat Florida. If it is ever planted with the eucalyptus-tree, now extensively cultivated in the south, and which often attain the extraordinary height of 300 and 400 feet, the trees will in due time be taller than the mountain.

There are some pretty little lakes in the interior of the island. One of these, Lake Killarney, is a very charming spot, with a fine view of the western coast. The lake is about three miles long by one in breadth. All along the shores are pineapple plantations, which are uncommonly effective when the pines are in bloom. The plants are set in rows all over the field, about one or two feet apart, and what with their variegated foliage—bright green and deep purple—and their vivid scarlet flowers, they make a striking foreground to any picture. The Bahama pines are considered the best in these latitudes, and are shipped in large quantities to Europe and North America.

The crowning glory of Nassau is the unrivalled bay, with its enchantingly clear, crystal water. Many a happy day have I spent, sailing round the pretty shores of this pleasant island. We usually had for "captain" a certain remarkable darkie, by name

"Cap'en" Tannyson Stump, one of those sable worthies you read about, full of drollery, shrewd and witty withal, and a capital sailor into the bargain. The Cap'en is reputed wealthy, for he is a great favourite with the visitors, and, moreover, is considered, by the inhabitants of Grant Town, the greatest "dissentin' minister" on the island. Amongst other natural wonders the "Cap'en" took us to see was the "sea garden." I wish Victor Hugo could have studied it, for possibly he might have been tempted to describe it, in his vivid language, as a pendant to his sea-monster, the devil-fish of the "Toilers of the Sea." Thus should we have had a glowing word picture of the beautiful instead of the hideous—the paradise of the sea, and not its hell. They give you a box with a glass bottom to look through. You put it over the side of the boat, and dip it beneath the waves. Lo! you behold the garden of the sea-nymphs, the home of Aphrodite. Beneath you, seen through the pellucid waters of this vast aquarium, is a lovely sea-garden, full of every imaginable delicate-tinted sea-flower. Some are pale pink, others light yellow, and some brown as leaves in autumn, massed round the vivid purple and scarlet sea-anemones, which cling to the summits of beds of pearly coral. Here purple sea-fans wave gently to and fro. There are groves of trumpet sponges, and beds of marine blossoms of all kinds and shapes. Fish as brilliant as humming-birds—red, blue, metallic-green, and orange—peep knowingly in and out of the branches of this strange submarine vegetation, which is crossed and recrossed

in all directions by pathways of sparkling, silver gravel. Nothing more fascinating, more fairy-like, can be imagined. You expect at any moment to see Venus or one of her nymphs — or, perchance, old Edward's Sable Aphrodite—rise suddenly to the surface from this abode of cool delights.

Involuntarily the world-renowned description of the bottom of the sea was brought to my mind,—

> "Methought I saw . . .
> Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,
> Inestimable stones, unvalu'd jewels,
> All scatter'd in the bottom of the sea.
> Some lay in dead men's skulls, and, in those holes,
> Where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept
> (As 'twere in scorn of eyes) reflecting gems,
> That woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep,
> And mock'd the dead bones that lay scatter'd by."

A scene very similar to the one described by Shakespeare has been seen in these clear waters after a wreck. Many years ago, when a hurricane of unusual violence swept over the islands, and there were several ships lost in the usually glassy harbour, people, when calm set in again, had the horror of studying, from their boats, the tragic condition of the wrecked vessels at the bottom of the bay. They could see the drowned dead below, whom some weight oppressed and forbade to rise. I well remember, though 'tis long years since, the dread impression produced upon me by the sight of the "phantom ship." In the days of the Spaniards, a vessel of importance, a man-of-war, was wrecked and sunk opposite a place called Hog Island—Horace Greely's lovely daughter,

Gabriele, re-christened it Isle of Porcina. This vessel fell a victim in due time to the greed of those wondrous ants of the sea, the coral insects, who, with infinite industry, soon contrived to coat it with their microscopic huts, and now you see it lying full five fathoms deep beneath you, all white and hoary in its coraline encasement. The deck, the hull, the tattered rigging, ropes and chains, are all white with corals, and around the ghastly ship rise the pale blue walls of its sea prison.

The moonlight nights at Nassau, although marvellously beautiful, are not a little dangerous to fresh arrivals, on account of the heavy dews. I remember one evening we all went out to see the ruins of the fort built in 1788 by the Earl of Dunmore, memorably connected with the American Revolution. It certainly was a lovely sight, and the old grey walls and tower looked as well as any ruin on Rhine or Nile by that argentine radiance, approaching sunlight in its tropical brilliance, which renders things more or less romantic, be they ever so commonplace. The tall palms rustled in the breeze, and the bay was like a sheet of shivering quicksilver, just over where the imprisoned phantom ship rests, five fathoms down, "woo'd for ever to the slimy bottom of the deep." The sight was exquisite. The price more than one visitor ultimately paid in aching head and stiff rheumatic bones was anything but light!

And with this glimpse at an Isle of June, as New Providence has been aptly called — introduced into this book merely as a contrast—I take my leave.

Vale—gentle reader!—fare thee well.

APPENDIX I.

The Boyhood of Columbus.

No historical question has been more keenly disputed than that of the real place where Christopher Columbus was born. The majority incline to believe him to have been a native of Genoa, or else of the neighbouring town of Savona. One learned gentleman has even asserted in a very elaborate pamphlet, published not long ago, that he came from Cremona. The Abate Casanova of Ajaccio, in another pamphlet, attempts, on the strength of a very ancient but equally obscure tradition, to prove that Columbus was a Corsican. He goes so far as to point out the very house in the Vico del Filo at Calvi, in which he firmly believes the Discoverer first saw light. His statements, ingenious as they are, lack contemporary evidence to substantiate them, and very little research suffices to scatter them to the winds. I have lately seen a curious and rare French pamphlet, in which Columbus is declared to be a native of Marseilles, and yet another, the author of which endeavours to convince his readers that the Discoverer was born at Albenga. In short, a voluminous literature has sprung out of this vexed question, but to the serious student of the life and times of Columbus Genoa and Savona alone appear worthy of respect.

To the Marquis Staglieno of Genoa, one of the most enterprising of modern Italian historians, and to Mr Henry Harrisse, a learned and indefatigable American student of the life of Columbus, the definite determination of the great Navigator's birthplace is really due. He was born in Genoa, in a house standing still, near the ancient and recently restored gate of St Andrea, at the top of a long, steep street known as the Portorio, in the parish of San Stefano.

Domenico Colombo, the father of the illustrious navigator, is described by Washington Irving and other writers as a "wool comber," but in all the contemporary documents discovered by the historians just named he is invariably said to have been "a woollen manufacturer,"—a position very different from that of a wool comber, the difference being that between a mechanic and a tradesman. No wonder that Ferdinand Columbus indignantly contradicted an assertion which most of us, even in this democratic age, would keenly resent. Although never in affluent circumstances, Domenico and Susanna Colombo, Christopher's parents, were evidently highly respectable tradespeople, who spent the whole of their lives between Genoa and Savona. Probably Domenico Colombo was born at Quinto, a village not many miles distant from the capital of the Genoese Republic. His father, Giovanni Colombo, undoubtedly lived there, for, in a document dated 1439, he is described as "Giovanni Colombo of Quinto, the father of Domenico of Genoa." This Giovanni was, it seems, according to another and still more ancient

deed, the son of a certain Giovanni Colombo, of Fontanarossa, another village in the district. As the inhabitants of this village were engaged in sheep-dealing, it is probable that this Giovanni was a wool merchant, and since Fernando Columbo, with the justifiable vanity of the son of a great man, seems to have been always desirous of claiming a social position, and signs himself, on more than one occasion, as "of Fontanarossa," we may go so far as to conclude that the Colombo (or Columbus) family was, according to its own tradition, the principal in that place. The family and Christian names of the great-grandmother and grandmother of the Discoverer of the New World are lost. His mother, however, was Susanna of Fontanarossa, a native of the suburb of Bisagno. This is proved by a document in the Savonese archives, whereby, on the 7th August 1743, "Susanna, daughter of Giacomo of Fontanaruba (the Latin for Fontanarossa), in the Bisagno, agrees to allow her husband, Domenico Colombo of Genoa, to sell a house situated in that city, near the Olivella Gate." It is described as a house with a pleasant garden, in the parish of San Stefano, and next door to the house and property of Nicola Paravagna, and adjacent to the property of Antonio Bondi. "The house faces the principal street, and is close to the old wall of the town." In this document Domenico Colombo is specially designated as a citizen of Savona—because, as he had by this time resided there some years, he was entitled to citizenship.

This house, however, is not, as has been so frequently and erroneously stated, the one in which Columbus was born. It has long since disappeared, to make way for the enlargement of the neighbouring hospital. The Porta (or Gate) Olivella stood for centuries to the right of the church of San Stefano. As this house is very often mentioned in deeds of the period of the last half of the fifteenth century as belonging to the family of Domenico Colombo, we are able to trace its history with fair accuracy. It formed part of the dower of Susanna Fontanarossa, for, as we have already seen, it could not be sold without her permission. It is probable that the family, instead of living in it, was in the habit of letting it. On more than one occasion the tenant did not pay his rent, and in 1476 Domenico Colombo had to come from Savona to Genoa to exact it. Unable to get the £20 due to him for arrears, he raised (through his notary, a certain Signor Camogli) a loan on the sum, the tenant, Malio, becoming a guarantee for the amount of his unpaid rent—"Occasione pensionis euiusdem domus ipsius Dominici quam tenet et conducit, etc."

Domenico Colombo possessed yet another house, still standing, and situated close to the recently restored Gate of Sant Andrea, at the top of the long, steep street still called Portorio. In this venerable building Christopher Columbus was unquestionably born, in 1451.

Four years before the discovery of America by his illustrious son, Domenico Colombo, being in reduced

circumstances, was obliged to transfer this house to his son-in-law Bavarello, the husband of his only daughter Bianchinetta. The papers relative to this proceeding are still in existence, and bear the date July 30, 1489. Domenico Colombo certainly lived here with his wife and family from 1435 to 1470, when they went to Savona. This is proved by the register of the monastery of San Stefano, in which they are regularly entered as paying a yearly ecclesiastical tax to the Prior during the whole of this period. They left Genoa in 1470, and resided at Savona until 1484. The Savonese archives, however, contain frequent mention of Domenico until 1494, when he again returned to Genoa, where, in all probability, he died, some years later. In the deed authorising the sale of the house in Porta Olivella, the witnesses are "Christopher Colombo and Giovanni Pellegrino, sons of Domenico and Susanna Colombo."

Washington Irving was unaware of the existence of this son Giovanni Pellegrino, for he states that "Christopher Columbus was the eldest of three brothers only —Bartholomew and Giacomo, or James (written Diego in Spanish)." Giovanni Pellegrino was the second brother, and died unmarried in 1489. We have more than this proof of his existence. In another document he is named together with his three brothers,—Christopher, Bartholomew, and Giacomo. In 1501, ten years after his death, and some time after that of his father, a man named Corasso Cuneo summoned the sons of Domenico Colombo before the tribunals of Savona for non-payment of the price due to him for

lands purchased by their father Domenico many years before his decease. In this curious document we read the names of Christopher and James—"Christophorem et Jacobum, fratres de Columbi, filiis et heredes quondam Dominici eorum patris." In the next register concerning this affair, and dated the same month and year, Bartholomew is mentioned—"Cristoferi, Bartolomei et Jacobi de Columbis, quondam Domenici et ipsius heredem." There is no mention of Bianchinetta, the only sister of the illustrious navigator. She, being a married woman, was not, according to Genoese law, entitled to inherit from her father. Here, then, we have the most positive contemporary evidence that Domenico Colombo was the father of four sons, respectively named Christopher, Giovanni Pellegrino or Pilgrim (a name sometimes found in old English registers), Bartolomeo or Bartholomew, and Giacomo or Diego,—and, therefore, the father of Christopher Columbus, Discoverer of the New World, who, as everybody knows, had two brothers, companions in his travels, named Bartholomew and Giacomo (or Diego). We learn that, according to documents far too numerous to be quoted here, the said Domenico was a taxpaying resident in the Via di Sant Andrea, in the city of Genoa, between the years 1435 and 1470. Another and most important paper, recently discovered by the Marquis Staglieno in the Atti Notarilli of the city of Genoa, declares Christopher Columbus to be nineteen years old in 1470. He was born then, we may presume, in October 1451, during the time of his

father's residence in the house now officially declared his birthplace, and situated hard by the noble old Gate of Sant Andrea.

It is a fortunate thing for Italian history that, in accordance with a very ancient custom, on the decease of a notary, his papers and registers are taken charge of by the State, and carefully preserved in an office specially set apart for the purpose. Although the enormous accumulation of papers thus preserved from century to century may, in many instances, be deemed of little importance, they have proved invaluable funds of information for the historian. It was among the papers of the notary Stella that Signor Bertolotti unearthed the particulars of the life and trial of Beatrice Cenci. It was among those of Pietro Belasio and Nicola Raggio that the Marquis Staglieno discovered the following curious facts concerning Columbus :—

"In 1470, on the thirtieth of October, Domenico Colombo and his son Christopher appeared before the above-named notaries of the city of Genoa, in order to confirm and conclude a contract in which the said Christopher Colombo declares himself, with his father's endorsement, debtor to the said Belasio to the amount of Genoese lire 48. 15. 6. (or about 300 francs) for wine procured by him on credit for the supply of his ship, now in the harbour of Genoa. Domenico, his father, holds himself security for his said son, who is nineteen years of age. Christofferus de Colombo filius Domenico Maior anni decemnovum."

And, according to Genoese law, of age.

Columbus tells us in his Autobiography that he went to sea when he was fourteen. Hence, in 1470, he had been five years a sailor, but he had not, as yet, wholly

abandoned the paternal roof, to reside permanently in Portugal. He did not do so until six years later. Now, if he went to sea when he was fourteen, and was still at sea when he was nineteen, what time had he for studying at the University of Pavia, where, according to most historians, he acquired his proficiency in Latin, and in such sciences as were then taught? In my opinion, he never was near Pavia in his life. No document in Pavian archives proves that Columbus was a student at that renowned University. The statement rests only on a very slender local tradition, and on Las Casas' assertion that he "completed his studies in Pavia." Possibly this writer made a slip of the pen, and, meaning Patria, wrote Pavia—or did the printer's devil make the blunder? Certainly Columbus' family was not in a position to send him to a distant University, and, moreover, there was no necessity for their so doing, as Genoa possessed famous colleges and schools of her own.

At the bottom of the long, steep street Portorio, not very far from his father's house, was a school, directed by the Servite fathers, whose church, Santa Maria de' Servi, still exists. It strikes me as much more probable that the boy Columbus attended there, and that some learned monk taught him Latin, than that he should have been sent to Pavia, as great a distance from Genoa, in those days, as Paris is now. Moreover, the learned notary Andrea de Cario was a friend and neighbour of the family. This gentleman was well off, and, although married, usually wore an ecclesiastical habit, and acted as the archbishop's Chancellor for close

on half a century. Among his papers and registers, still preserved, are several mentions of Domenico Colombo and his wife and her family, the Fontanarosse. Possibly this learned personage may have undertaken a part of the education of the precocious lad.

If further proof were required of the intimate connection which always existed between Domenico Colombo and his illustrious son Christopher, I need simply record the fact that, even when the Great Man was himself in dire distress, he remembered his aged father, and sent him money to relieve his pressing debts. The affection between the three brothers seems to have been extended to certain cousins, for we find, in a document dated 1476, that Giovanni, Matteo, and Amighetto Colombo, of Quinto, signed a deed whereby money was raised to enable the eldest, Giovanni, to go to Spain to serve under his cousin Christopher, who is described as an Admiral. These men were the sons of Antonio, a brother of Domenico.

Not one of the documents I have quoted is particularly interesting in itself. They are very commonplace, and yet how wonderfully they help us to reconstruct the past! A name here, an allusion there, an unpaid bill, a summons before the tribunals on a pressing demand for payment of rent, a receipt, a mere scrap of paper with a great name attached to it, opens out an entirely new field of research, and dispels mountains of controversy and theory. I felt myself in very intimate contact with Columbus when my eyes first rested on the quaint, old-world documents which

he, and his father, and mother, and brothers, signed, four hundred years ago.

Quite recently, three papers, enriched with the signatures of Columbus and his father, were unearthed in the State archives of the city of Genoa (L'Archivio di Stato). From them we gather that, in 1470, Domenico Colombo, either because his affairs were going badly, or because he perceived a better chance for himself and family elsewhere, determined to leave Genoa and establish himself in Savona. He was then in the debt of a certain Geronimo da Porto, to the amount of 25 lire, or 117 francs modern money, and evidently could not pay him. Da Porto must have heard of his intention to leave the city. He summoned him and his eldest son Christopher before the tribunal, for non-payment of the debt in question. The judge decided that Domenico and Christopher Colombo should pay the amount within a year from that date. Whether they eventually paid or not is doubtful, for, in a codicil to Columbus' will, made some thirty years later, he leaves "to the heirs of Geronimo da Porto, of Genoa, the father of Benito da Porto, 20 ducats"—which is nearly double the amount originally claimed, and leads one to think that it includes interest for a long period.

In these documents, Domenico Colombo is invariably described as "Dominicus Columbus, lanerius de Janua, habitator in Saone,"—"a wool-weaver, living in Savona." In addition to the evidence already given that Columbus was born in Genoa, I will recall the facts that he himself, three times in his biography,

repeats that he was a native of that town—"where I lived, and whence I came"—and that Andreo Bemaldez, curate of Los Pallacios, who was his intimate friend, informs us that he told him he was born in Genoa. His contemporaries, Agostino Giustiniani, Antonio de Herrera, and Antonio Gallo, the Chancellor of the Bank of St George, who corresponded with Columbus, repeat the same assertion. Then, again, it is to the city of Genoa that the dying Columbus leaves the breviary given him by Pope Alexander VI. Where is it? Certainly not in Genoa.

Genoa in 1451 presented an aspect different from that which it wears now, although the street in which Columbus was born, and its neighbourhood, have not sustained many changes. The ancient houses still tower up six and eight stories on either side of the narrow and picturesque thoroughfare of the Portorio, some of them preserving traces of Gothic windows and doors, and of a sort of Moorish decoration, running just below the projecting roof, which is peculiar to Genoa. This street has been known as the Portorio, or *Porta Aurea*, for centuries. It leads up the hill from the outer wall of the city, and the characteristic church of San Stefano, with its black and white marble façade, which gives its name to the suburb, to the inner gate of St Andrea, and the second ring of walls, now destroyed. This gate is a noble specimen of feudal architecture, recently somewhat over-restored. A few years ago it was ten times more picturesque than now, with the quaint, old houses clinging to its rough walls like barnacles on a ship's side. These

have been removed, and the grand proportions of the arch, formerly attached on either side to stern and lofty walls, built in 1155 to resist the attacks of Barbarossa, have been displayed. In front of this ancient gate is a little platform, surrounded by tall and irregular houses, coeval with the gate itself. No. 37, lately occupied by a tinman, is the house in which Columbus was born, and spent his childhood and youth. I believe, with Mr Harrisse and the Marquis Staglieno, that he was born in the front room—the best bedroom—of the first floor, between October 1446 and October 1451. The date must remain uncertain, because, although the important paper I have mentioned described him as being nineteen years of age in 1470, it must be remembered that nineteen was the legal age of manhood under the old Genoese law, which was identical with the ancient Roman code. The fact that he was of age—that is nineteen—would never have been specified, if he had not been a very young man at the time. He might perhaps have been twenty-three or even twenty-four, but the probability is that he had just come of age. In 1886 the Municipality of Genoa purchased this house for 36,000 francs, and it is to be kept intact in memory of Columbus for ever. Over the door is this inscription :—

Nulla . Domus . titulo, dignior
Heic
Paternis : in : ædibus.
Christophorus : Columbus.
Pueritium
Primioque . juvantam . trasegit.

I think, with Mr Harrisse, that "Forsam natus" might with propriety be added.

The great Gothic arch of the stern old gate frowned down on the modest dwelling, and the child Columbus must often have been told the story of the chains, which in my own boyhood I remember to have seen, hanging on the grim walls on either side of the arch. They were courteously restored in 1862 to the Pisans (from whom they had been captured in 1290) in honour of Italian unity.

Not very far off stood, until quite the end of the last century, a curious old house, with a figure of St Christopher painted upon it, which doubtless had a lamp constantly burning before it. Possibly it was in honour of the saint here represented that the future Discoverer of the New World was christened Christopher. On entering the city proper, through the arch of St Andrea, the prospect, in the days of Columbus' youth, was by no means cheerful. The houses, like those of Edinburgh, rose seven and even eleven storeys, making the narrow courts and passage-like streets look not unlike dark openings in a Californian cañon. The hilly position of the town, however, lent itself admirably to picturesque effects, and the brilliance of the deep blue sky above, and of the broad streaks of sunlight falling on the squares and little piazza, brightened what might otherwise have been exceedingly gloomy and depressing. The palaces of the nobility looked more like fortresses than civic residences, with scarcely a window on the street. Each possessed a tall, turreted watch-tower of red

brick, picked out with marble, the finest specimen of which, now existing, is that of the Imbriaci. The churches and oratories were amazingly numerous, but they were nearly all exactly alike, built in very plain Gothic architecture, with façades streaked with alternated layers of black and white marble. A few have escaped the vandalistic restorations of the 17th and 18th centuries, and of these the best remaining specimens are the Cathedral, San Matteo Doria, Santa Maria del 'Orto (desecrated), San Cosmo, San Donato, San Stefano, and Sant Agostino (desecrated).

But in the 15th century they were to be met with at every turn of the street, giving a very peculiar appearance to the city. The finest palaces bordered the Ripa by the port, and these were so beautifully decorated with frescoes and gilding that Petrarch declared that "nothing could be imagined more magnificent." The Strade Nuova, Nuovissima, and Balbi, with their splendid Renaissance palaces, did not come into existence until late in the 16th and 17th centuries. The Cathedral was in much the same condition as at present, and the Bank of St George, now in process of restoration, was considered one of the wonders of the world.

If the architecture of the city was picturesque, its population was indescribably so. The streets teemed with life and colour. There were men in armour, sailors from all parts of the world, guardsmen in the Doge's liveries striped scarlet and white, ladies of rank proceeding to church attended by their women, and escorted by little negro pages bearing their trains, or screening them from the ardour of the sun

with immense, crimson silk parasols. Rich dames, lolling in litters hung with painted Cordova leather, were carried to and fro on the shoulders of stalwart African slaves. Veiled women of the people, with their children clinging round them, sitting outside their doors, not infrequently engaged in a hair hunt. Priests, monks, and nuns, in every imaginable kind of ecclesiastical costume, mingled with herculean porters from the quays, with soldiers and nobles, Levantines and Jews, each in their own peculiar costume, so that if the houses were sombre, the streets were ablaze with brilliant and varied dresses. At night, however, the city looked desolate. Only the lamps burning before the images of the Madonna and Saints lit up the gloomy thoroughfares and darksome piazzas. At "Ave Maria," in winter time, everybody was indoors saying the Rosary. Three times a day, as the "Angelus" tolled, the whole population stopped and repeated the angelic salutation. This pious custom lasted until quite late into the first half of the present century.

Unlike Venice, Genoa was no city of pleasure. On the other hand, its population dearly loved pageantry. Religious processions of the utmost splendour were of such everyday occurrence that people scarcely noticed them. The Doge went about attended by at least a hundred officers and servants. On great festivals the balconies were hung with brocades and wreaths of fresh flowers, while half the town preceded the Host or the images of the Madonna and Saints, to the admiration of the other half, crowding the sidewalks and the overhanging balconies.

Such, then, was Genoa,—Queen of the Mediterranean, as Venice was Queen of the Adriatic,—when Christopher Columbus first saw the light. His parents were, as we have seen, people in a humble but eminently respectable position. Their manner of life differed little from that of their neighbours. Thus was passed, only fifty years ago, the life of an honest Genoese family of the lower middle class. At five in the morning the family, apprentices, and servants rose. After saying the "Angelus," they proceeded to the nearest church to Mass. A slice of bread, with fruit in summer, or dried figs in winter, and a glass of wine, formed the first meal or breakfast. Then came work until noon, when the frugal dinner was served—meat once a week, and sweets only on great festivals. As a rule, it consisted of a *minestrone*, a succulent and wholesome sort of soup, made with all kinds of vegetables, rice, and bits of pork cut up into square pieces, macaroni, ravioli, and other like dishes. After this meal there was an hour for recreation. Then to work again until sunset, when the whole household repeated the "Angelus," and said the Rosary. In summer they would go processionally from street image to image, singing their Aves and Paters with uncommon unction before the holy figure, round which burned scores of little oil lamps, amid cart-wheel-shaped bouquets. Sometimes one-half the people on the street said the Rosary, while the other gave the responses. It is not surprising if, after a regime of this sort, Christopher Columbus grew up to be a very pious man. However, there were plenty of scandals

going the round of the town, even in 1451, and I am afraid religiosity rather than piety was the true characteristic of this singular population. Still, the evidence in favour of Columbus and his family is so greatly to their advantage that we may feel sure they were really people of exceptional integrity and sincere piety.

Little Genoese boys and girls were brought up rather sternly, and the *ferrula* was much in use. Often, no doubt, did the small Columbus, both at home and at school, hold out his chubby hand to receive the strokes. The mother and sister appeared in public very rarely, and were invariably veiled. The church was the principal object of these excellent people's existence. It is so to this day with a majority of the lower and middle-class Genoese, who spend half their time in church, and are quite as well pleased to go and hear a sermon as their neighbours at Turin are to attend a new play. I am quite sure that more than once a year the infant Columbus and his brothers, dressed up as saints, and very artistically too, walked in the processions of the three or four confraternities attached to the church and convent of St Stefano. I daresay Christopher often impersonated the infant St John, or even the Child Jesus, and was carried on the shoulders of some gigantic brother disguised as St Christopher :

"San Cristofero grosso,
Porta il mondo a dorso."

—"the big St Christopher carries the world on his back."

In Holy Week, what a time these pious folks had, to be sure! There was so much to see that people were fain to leave their business to take care of itself, and either to walk in the processions or else watch them wend their way along the tortuous streets. There were the flagellants to see, who whipped themselves until their bare backs were red. As to the Guilds and Corporations: they were a source of infinite interest and excitement! Each had its *Cassaccia* or shrine to carry, and, above all, its tremendous crucifix, which people wagered would never reach its destination, so terrific was its weight. If the wretched man who carried it staggered and fell, hundreds of lire changed hands, and if he managed to restore it to its place in the Oratory belonging to the Guild, he was acclaimed as great a hero as a victorious modern jockey. And the Sepulchres on Holy Thursday, and the Procession of the Passion on Good Friday, all these wonderful things, and many others too numerous to describe, did the youthful Columbus admire, enjoy, and venerate,[1] we may be sure.

The boy Columbus had his sports, too, like any other lad in every part of the world, old and new. He played *boccie* or bowls, and *palla*, a sort of football, and, like all other Genoese urchins, he was, I doubt not, an excellent diver and swimmer. His character in after life, so full of noble courage, gentleness, piety,

[1] Then, in all probability, he witnessed the coronation of the Doge Paul of Novi, a dyer who certainly did business with his father, and lived in the same neighbourhood. The romantic and tragic history of this Doge recalls that of Marino Faliero. Deposed by the mob, he was decapitated.

and justice, speaks volumes for the education he received at his mother's knee. His devotion to parents is proved by his frequent mention of them, and he loved the beautiful city "where he was born, and whence he came" with patriotic ardour.

Although there is no positive proof that such was the case, we may safely conclude that, together with all the Genoese of his period, he was imbued from the earliest age with a love of the sea and of adventure. In the gloom of his father's cavernous shop he must often have heard foreign and native merchants, captains, and sailors, who came to purchase woollen goods, relate tales of extraordinary discoveries made in the unknown seas beyond the Pillars of Hercules. Vast, indeed, was the commerce of Genoa at this epoch. Her vessels roamed the seas as far as the Caspian, where Marco Polo found them trading from port to port. Genoa rivalled Venice in the Levant, and held the keys of the commerce of North Africa. In Bruges her merchants had a hall of their own; it still exists, with the effigy of St George over its Gothic portal. Genoese merchants were well known in the crowded thoroughfares of London city, and their velvets and silks were to be bought in the High Street of Edinburgh and in the markets of Copenhagen and Christiania.

In the last half of the 15th century the world talked much of discoveries of magic isles of pearl, and of deceptive islands that rose on the horizon of the Atlantic, and, syren-like, deluded venturesome travellers to their doom. In Genoa lived the Vivaldi family,

descendants of Vadino and Guido Vivaldi, and of Ugolino and Tedesco Vivaldi, who, between 1285 and 1290, discovered not only the Azores, but also Madeira and the Canaries. The fact is mentioned very minutely in records of the 13th century. Often must Columbus have heard of these bold pioneers, and likewise of the ship and its crew of thirty men, which, in 1467,—as we learn from Pietro d'Abano, in his *Conciliatore*,—the Genoese Government equipped in Lisbon, at its expense, and sent on a mission of discovery, from whence none ever returned. Sailors, whose frail vessels had been driven out to sea far beyond the coast of Spain towards "the new lands," had doubtless seen the Azores, and, returning home, had spread the most fantastic stories of cities of gold inhabited by a people whose heads grew beneath their shoulders. In short, the imaginative child must often have listened to tales of wonderment such as Othello poured out to Desdemona. At fourteen he went to sea. He was in the prime of his glorious manhood on that momentous morn of October 1492, when the verdant islands of San Salvador and Cuba rose like emeralds out of the shining sea to delight his thankful vision, and enriched European civilization by opening the gates of a New World before its wondering eyes.[1]

[1] This Appendix and the following one respectively appeared in another and less elaborate form in the *National Review* and the *Antiquary*, and are reproduced here, with additional matter, by the courteous consent of the editors of these reviews.—R. D.

APPENDIX II.

Notes on some Old Papers connected with the History of the West Indies.

In 1886–7 the writer of these lines became closely connected with the West Indian Section of the Indian and Colonial Exhibition, South Kensington. Sir Augustus Adderley, the Commissioner for the West Indies, a gentleman of varied knowledge and experience, displayed an activity in organising the Court for which he was responsible, which resulted in a thorough and most satisfactory representation of the various West Indian islands under British dominion. To add attraction to his Department, Sir Augustus set himself to collect every historical document, book, print, and MS., illustrative of the early history of the islands, which he could procure. With this object, he entrusted the author with the mission of obtaining whatever records of Columbus and his companions existed in Rome and elsewhere, even in the Antilles. Thanks to letters from Cardinal Manning, an interview with Cardinal Simeone, then Director of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda, was soon obtained, and his introduction to the Secretary, Archbishop Jacobini, granted, in the most friendly manner. A

minute search of the archives of this famous institution was immediately made, but nothing of any particular importance connected with the subject of enquiry was found to exist. Monsignore Jacobini, however, averred that he had heard a story to the effect that in Napoleon I.'s time, the archives of the Propaganda were roughly packed in carts, conveyed to Cività Vecchia, and there embarked for France and Paris. Whilst passing through the streets of Rome, several bundles of most valuable papers were jolted out, picked up, and some—but very few—restored to the Congregation. Of the rest, only a part were returned to the College, whilst almost all the earlier papers were retained in Paris, and are now stored in the Bibliothèque Nationale and elsewhere. The existing archives of the Propaganda only date from the first half of the present century. It was found impossible to obtain permission for the exhibition of many treasures among the Vatican MSS.—which, seen through glass cases, would have hardly, indeed, produced the effect they deserved. All my attention, therefore, was turned to the small but most interesting collection of parchments and MSS. in the Borgian Museum. Pre-eminent among these are the far-famed Borgian Maps, the first of which is probably the earliest existing geographical record of Central America and the West Indies. Down this famous sheet Pope Alexander VI.'s own hand traced the lines dividing the whole of the New World into two equal portions, one for Spain, the other for Portugal. Notwithstanding his evident desire to oblige the Commissioner and the Committee, His Holiness decided

that so precious and historical a relic could not be allowed to leave its place, but he courteously gave permission for the removal to the London Exhibition of the second Borgian Map, known as "Diego Ribero," a document of the highest archæological value. The drawing, perfect and beautiful, was executed by Diego Ribero, geographer to Charles V. from 1494 to 1529, that is, during the lifetime of Columbus, and under his personal supervision. Down the centre pass two slight lines, *facsimile* of the divisional lines traced by Alexander VI. on the first Borgian Map. The map, though singularly clearly drawn, is full of absurd inaccuracies. The West Indies are shown with precision, and the names given with considerable elaboration. America, on the other hand, is barely indicated, the coast alone being defined, and Africa is introduced with the Nile wandering somewhat at random down to three lakes, situated just above what is now known as Cape Colony. A number of very well-drawn ships are introduced, of colossal dimensions, in comparison with the land, and bearing inscriptions to the effect that they are either bound for, or returning from, the "Maluccas," by which it would appear that these were then considered the principal maritime port of the world. The arms of Pope Julius II. — an oak-tree with twisted branches—are introduced in a shield at the foot, notwithstanding the fact that the map bears the date of Clement VII. As a specimen of Italian, or rather Spanish, caligraphy, of the 16th century, it is superb, and in most perfect preservation. The Congregation of the Propaganda also lent an engraved reproduction

of the famous Marco Polo Map, a curious specimen of German geographical lore, at the commencement of the 15th century, the original of which is engraved on brass. It was found to be far too heavy for transportation. In this map the world is reproduced surrounded by water, and the general appearance is not unlike that of a drop of Thames water as seen through a powerful microscope, so confused are the earth and water, and so mixed up with representations of extraordinary living creatures.

A very interesting collection of books, maps, prints, and MSS., illustrative of the early history of the West Indies, belonging to Sir Graham Briggs, Mr Audley C. Miles, Mr Henry Stevens, and the writer, were also exhibited, and the following notes on this improvised library, which will certainly never be gathered together again, will doubtless be found of interest, as throwing considerable light on the bygone domestic history of our colonies in the Antilles.

In the eighteenth century their prosperity was at its height, and a surprising amount of luxury and magnificence existed in the capitals of each of our settlements. In 1741, we find the Island of Montserrat considerably exercised (*The Laws of Montserrat from* 1640 *to* 1788) by many open "Breaches of the Sabbath," a general neglect of "Public Worship," to the scandalizing of the Protestant religion, and by the encroachments of the "Scarlet Whore of Rome." To remedy this state of affairs, the rites and ceremonies of the Church are, according to the authority mentioned above, to be immediately placed on a footing with

those practised in England, and "an able preaching minister is to be maintained, at a cost to the public exchequer of 14,000 lbs. of sugar per annum, or the value thereof in tobacco, cotton, wool, or indigo. Moreover, the said minister can demand not exceeding 100 lbs. of sugar, or the value thereof as above, for the joining together any of the inhabitants of this island in the holy and lawful state of matrimony." Meanwhile, Trinidad and Cuba, on the other hand, were gravely occupied by the question of Protestant encroachments. These islands were still Spanish, and the Inquisition was in full swing, occasionally roasting an unhappy wight suspected of heresy or idolatry.

"The Laws of Montserrat" enlighten us as to the manner in which the negroes were treated in some of the islands. Thus, in 1670, an Act was passed forbidding the negro to enter any plantation save his master's after nightfall, and should any be found, the owner or overseer of such plantation was given full power to punish him as he chose. "And should any negroes harbour or conceal any such loiterers in their cabins, they shall be taken before the next Justice of the Peace, and there his or her owner shall, in the presence of the said Justice, exercise the punishment of forty lashes."

Slaves were not permitted to enter a field of cane with any lights or fire whatsoever, as, "by their insufferable boldness in so doing, much damage has been done, and more is likely to ensue, and this is enacted to prevent future inconvenience, which may happen by such insufferable boldness."

Should a slave, transgressing this law, happen to set fire to the canes, he or she "shall not only be whipped, but, if it pleases their master, be put to death in any fashion he shall devise." If a negro stole a cow or any other head of cattle, he was to be brought before the next Justice of the Peace and publicly whipped. This punishment did not appear to have been sufficiently severe, for by the year 1693, theft had grown so common that an Act was passed ordaining that "henceforth any negro that shall be taken stealing or carrying away stock, cattle, or provisions, amounting to the value of twelve pence, shall suffer such death as his master shall think fit to award." If a negro was proved guilty of a theft below the value of twelve pence current money of the island, "he shall only suffer a severe whipping, and have both his ears cut off for the first offence, but for the second offence he shall suffer death in the form aforesaid . . . . and it shall be lawful to shoot at, and if possible, kill any negro he shall find stealing his provision, provided such provision be not within forty foot of the common path, and that the party so killing hath not expressed hatred or malice against the owner of such negro." The white servants might, it appears, "be kicked, but not whipped," otherwise they were treated very little better than the slaves. Negroes caught without tickets authorising their absence from their own plantation, are to be whipped with thirty-nine lashes by the constable who took them, for which service, "in each case he receives six shillings." Should a slave absent himself for the space of three months from his master's service, he was to suffer death

as a felon, the owner to be allowed 3500 lbs. of sugar, out of the public stock, in compensation. Should a slave be killed or maimed by another man's slave, his owner had his choice of the manner of the offender's death for the first-named offence, and for the second he could decide whether he should be whipped, or the offence be atoned by compensation. From the *Acts and Statutes of Barbados* (1652), we find that the maker of a fraudulent and deceitful sale on that island of any "servant, cattel, negroes, and other flock or commodities, shall suffer six months' imprisonment, and stand in the Pillory two hours with his ears nailed thereto, with a paper in his hat, signifying the cause of his punishment . . . . and whosoever shall be convicted of carrying away any goods whatsoever after the same have been legally attached, shall be sent to prison during fourteen days, and if before the fourteenth day he have not made satisfaction to his Creditor, he shall be put in the Pillory and lose both his ears."

To turn to pleasanter things, we learn (from *A Short History of Barbadoes*, published in 1742) that nothing can exceed the splendour of the planters' manner of life. They have as fine houses as any in England, and are attended upon by regiments of negroes, and white servants in gorgeous liveries. "Their plate and their china, their fine gowns and their genteel manners, eclipse anything that the writer has ever seen on his travels, and their hospitality cannot be imagined—an hospitality for which Great Britain was once so deservedly famed." At the time when England was divided into two factions, Cavaliers and Roundheads,

the planters, though naturally favouring one side or the other, made a law amongst themselves, forbidding the use of either of the two words, on penalty of giving a dinner to their neighbours. Many purposely made themselves liable to the penalty as a pretext for entertaining their friends. In those good old times, the Governors, notably those of Jamaica and Barbadoes, kept great state. When they went to church, they were preceded by pages in silver and gold liveries, and gorgeous officers—in fact, the splendour displayed recalled that of the King himself, when he betook himself in State to St Paul's. A good deal of jealousy was evinced, at times, between the citizens, as to who was entitled to attend the Governor's entertainments. The scene round Government House in James Street, Spanish Town on great ball nights, must have been of the most picturesque description. The ladies arrived in their Sedan-chairs, accompanied by armies of slaves, carrying torches. There must have been some great beauties amongst them, for we find the author of *Letters from Barbadoes* deeply impressed with "the majestic beauty of Miss Dolton," "the divine Miss Gordon," "the celestial Miss Alleyne," while, he declares,

> "Sisters Carter, as two meteors bright,
> Shine glorious round, and diffuse light."

Balls and parties, routs and dinners, suppers and theatres, occupied the attention of the West Indian ladies to an extent which would have amazed their descendants.

The advertisements in the Colonial papers of the last

century teem with offers of "brocaded silk and satins, beaver hats, gold-headed canes, snuff-boxes, costly china, plate, and patch-boxes," which were imported on board every vessel, and found a ready sale amongst the luxury-loving inhabitants. No wonder that occasionally, as we learn from the *Groans of the Plantation*, the islanders fell into pecuniary embarrassment, and that money grew so scarce that large cargoes of negroes had to be exported for sale at Charlestown and New Orleans.

The streets of a West Indian city must have presented a very picturesque spectacle at this period. Here groups of great ladies—in hoops and sarsenets, with powdered hair and "patches," escorted by their spruce cavaliers in the daintiest satin garments which the London or Paris tailors could supply, their white clad servants at a respectful distance behind them, carrying their parasols and fans, or lagging in the rear with their heavily gilt Sedan-chairs—pass up and down under the shadow of the tropical vegetation, hardly pausing, probably, to notice the public flogging of a couple of runaway slaves, or the edifying spectacle of a white servant caught in the act of stealing, seated with his legs and arms in the pillory, and his nose and ears freshly cut off. Yon learned-looking gentleman may be Dr Hans Sloane, the famous naturalist, with his friend Dr Burton, a noted preacher, who occasionally goes the round of the various islands to exercise his eloquence, and eat a series of good dinners in return for his pious endeavours to save the souls of his entertainers. The conversation is not of the most elevated description.

Little or no literature is consumed and canvassed, save such as comes out in packages from England—*The Gentleman's Magazine*, *The Lady*, *The Tatler*, Miss Frances Burney's latest novel, Oliver Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*, or Fielding's *Tom Jones*. Through the open windows of the roomy houses, with their broad verandahs, floats the tinkling of the sempiternal spinette. Very occasionally, as we learn from the *Grenada Gazette* (of which a complete file for the years 1792–3 are exhibited by Mr. J. G. Wells), "a grand pianoforte" makes its appearance, and is considered a great novelty, for which a very high price is asked and paid.

The *History of the Barbadoes* states that Lord Howe became Governor in 1733, but fortunately for the Colony, he did not hold the office long, "for if he had remained a few years longer, he would have ruined Barbadoes by his introduction of luxury."

In every island, perpetual war was waged between the Governor and the people, and the people seem to have had good cause to protest, for almost without exception, it would appear, the Governors sent from the mother country were most tyrannical and cruel in their methods. This is proved by the continual protests and "Articles of Complaint" that were forwarded to England. Many of these temporary rulers seem to have conceived their sole mission to be to extort money for their own private pockets by every means in their power, legal or illegal. To rule the country fairly, and to keep it in a settled condition—a by no means easy matter in those times—appears to have been quite a secondary matter in their eyes. A notable instance

is that of a Mr Lowther, who carried on the usual routine of extortion. He was sent out to Barbadoes in 1711, and in justice to others it must be said, that for downright wickedness, he far outstripped them. He "swallowed up the taxes as fast as they were raised, ships forced on the island by stress of weather were compelled to give him one half of their cargo to save the other; he seized rich ships without cause; and he suspended Mr Skeen, the Secretary, because he refused to allow him a pension of £400 per annum out of the fees in office. He kept a cause of Haggot *v.* King hanging up in Chancery all the time he was Governor, only because Mr Haggot would not consent to the marriage of a young lady under his guardianship to a person to whom Mr Lowther *owned he had sold her for* £15,000. Again, in order to accomplish his bargain, he was about taking her from Mr Haggot when she was married, and he did actually despoil him of the guardianship of her sister, declaring that no parent had a right to appoint a guardian to his child." When officially remonstrated with for some of his iniquities, Mr Lowther simply replied, "D——n your laws, don't tell me of the laws. I will do it, and let me see who dares dispute it." Again, the Governor of the Bahamas in 1701-2—Mr Elias Haskett—was, we are informed, such an iniquitous personage, that "he seizes all the claret and brandy imported into our own port for his own use, and most unmercifully doth whip the parish beadle (this is enough, surely, to make the late Mr Bumble turn in his grave) and the tax collector." This gentleman's evil doings are related in

a curious MSS. document of over twelve closely-printed pages, by one Captain Cole, who, it appears, was deputed, on his return to England, by the people of New Providence, to make an official complaint of their Governor.

A rare old pamphlet on the State of Jamaica, published early in the last century, contains a curious account of the arrival in that island, in 1687, of Christopher, Duke of Albemarle, on his appointment to the Governorship. He was the only son and heir of John Monk, who had helped to restore Charles II., and who had been rewarded with a dukedom, the Garter, and a princely fortune, which his successor completely dissipated, and reduced himself to beggary. To rid himself of his importunities, King James II. gave him the above-mentioned position in Jamaica, where he died, childless, soon after his arrival, and his honours became extinct. He seems, however, to have lived long enough to collect a considerable sum of money for his creditors. He entered into partnership with a Sir William Phipps, who, having discovered the wreck of a Spanish plate-ship, which had gone down in 1559, provided skilful divers to search for the sunken treasure, and the partners are reported to have recovered twenty-six tons of silver. When Albemarle arrived at Kingston, he behaved in a fashion as arbitrary as it was whimsical. He immediately called an assembly, which he dissolved as promptly, because one of the members, in a debate, repeated the adage "*Salus Populi suprema lex.*" His Grace took this member into custody, and caused him to be fined 600 crowns for his offence. Evidently James II. had en-

tertained some hope of converting the island of Jamaica to the Roman Catholic faith, for with Albemarle he sent out a missionary,—Father Thomas Churchill, but the Duke's death and the Revolution of 1688 upset the good Father's projects, and, after visiting Cuba, he returned to England. The Duchess, who accompanied her husband, was a very remarkable woman, and an exceedingly handsome one. The speaker of the assembly, in his first address, expatiated upon her presence in the following extraordinary strain of eloquence: "It is an honour," said he, "which the opulent Kingdoms of Mexico or Peru could never arrive at, to be visited by an English Duchess, and even Columbus' ghost would be appeased, could he but know that his own beloved soil was hallowed by such footsteps." In a very old private letter, included among the exhibits, was a singular account of the subsequent career of this Duchess. It seems that on the death of the Duke, she possessed herself of all the treasures he had rescued from the Spanish plate-ship, and refusing to part with a shilling, even to pay his legitimate debts, prepared to embark for England. But the creditors seized her person in the King's house, in Spanish Town, and attempted to carry her off. She contrived, however, to escape, and communicated her distress to the House of Assembly, who thereupon appointed a formidable committee of their ablest members to guard her day and night. After some delay, she was safely embarked for England, on one of the King's ships, and arrived in this country with all her fortune, on board the "Assistance" man-of-war, in the beginning of June

1688. For a year or so she made a great show in London society, gave her friends sumptuous entertainments, and herself, it would seem, incredible airs. At last the poor lady's mind gave way. She imagined herself destined to become the wife of the Emperor of China, who, having heard of her immense wealth, was hastening, she declared, to come to England, and pay her his addresses. She dwelt in Montague House, on the site of which the British Museum now stands, and she furnished the mansion sumptuously for the reception of her august suitor. She appears to have been a gentle and good-humoured person, even in her lunacy, and her attendants encouraged her in her delusions. They did more. They tried to turn her folly to good account by assisting a certain needy peer, the Duke of Montague, to personate his Chinese Majesty. "Here," continues the letter, "is the prettiest piece of business that has ever been. My Lord of Montague, disguised as the Chinese Emperor, has won the hand of that worthy, silly old woman the Duchess of Albemarle, and will, doubtless, soon confine her as a lunatic." She certainly was carefully enough guarded, but she seems to have been allowed to indulge her mania to her heart's content. She was wont to stride about her vast apartments, attired as a Chinese Empress, her attendants taking good care to kneel as she passed, and to address her in language befitting so transcendant a personage as the consort of the supreme ruler of the celestial Empire. Her Grace the Duchess of Albemarle and Empress of China survived her husband, the pretended Emperor, for many years, and died in 1734,

at the vast age of ninety-eight. She was, it seems, served upon the knee to the end of her long career, and expired in the full belief that she was a Celestial Empress.

The *Grenada Gazette*, a curious old newspaper to which I have already alluded, throws considerable light on the manners and customs of the period between 1792 and 1799. The details of the French Revolution are recorded with great minuteness, and it was evidently a subject of deep interest to the *Gazette's* numerous readers. The editor can scarcely contain his indignation as he relates the sufferings of the unfortunate French king and queen, and he feels sure God will punish the French people "for their barbarity and utter godlessness." He is certain a judgment will fall upon them "for their iniquitous conduct, their cruelty, and their general viciousness." "Oh!" he exclaims, "I have scarce the power to tell the terrible news of this day: the French king and queen are in prison. The French, by their own madness and folly, have thereby prepared themselves and their heirs for the bitterest punishment of God." When at length he reaches the execution of Marie Antoinette, he is "prostrate with horror, and dumb with fear." He can no longer proceed: "his pen is dry from sheer terror, and refuses to write." The poor gentleman is "thrown into a consternation" as he thinks of the fate in store for the afflicted little Dauphin. The series of slave advertisements which disgrace every number of the *Chronicle* are curious in their way. Thus the cargo of the ship "Ellen," consisting of 203 Gold Coast negroes, and that of another ship containing 343 young slaves, are both offered for

sale. "Both cargoes are in high health, and the terms of sale will be made as agreeable as possible to the purchaser." An estate in St Lucia, placed on the market, comprises amongst its stock "250 negroes, large and small, and six horses and five mules." There are among the negroes twenty tradesmen of great value." One person wants "a complete washerwoman. Anyone having one to dispose of may hear of a purchaser." There are many advertisements for the recovery of runaway slaves, "for whom a genteel reward will be offered," to be recognized by their backs, still sore from recent whippings, their cropped ears and split noses. These horrors seem to make no impression on the editor—the humane gentleman who so deplores the imprisonment of the French royal couple. He is not ashamed to advertise "a pretty boy, nearly white, for sale, price, £20," nor to call attention to Madame Marchand's announcement that she is about to leave the colony, and wishes to dispose of her stock-in-trade, consisting of "hardware, haberdashery, dry goods, a complete collection of the works of the best French authors, an excellent washerwoman, and two bedsteads." However, men should be judged, to some extent at all events, according to their lights, and it must be remembered that although, in the year of grace 1792, slavery was held throughout the West Indies to be a right divine, the papers above alluded to contained constant appeals to slave-owners to treat their human property with kindness. And perhaps, after all, the bulk of the negroes were a good deal happier than many free men are to-day, for plenty of

kindness was shown them. They were allowed three wives — many, perhaps, will think this was no very kind concession—and we read of parties given to the negroes, at which servants dressed up in their mistresses' finery, and danced to a most unreasonable hour of the night, to the sound of the sackbut and the tabor. I exhibited in the St Vincent Court of the Exhibition a delightful series of old engravings, representing negro festivities in the olden times. The darkies had all Sunday to themselves, and raised pandemonium in the principal streets of Spanish Town and Nassau, until the nuisance grew unendurable, and was put down. They used to sing, dance, and wrestle, at which last exercise they "were marvellously expert," to their hearts' content. When their behaviour in the streets became unbearable, they were prohibited from singing or dancing in the vicinity of churches or genteel folks' houses. Their food was good, and their huts were waterproof, at all events,—for it was to the interest of the owners, of course, to keep their slaves in perfect health. Nevertheless, the negroes always felt themselves an oppressed race, and many were their struggles for freedom. They concocted various plans for a general rising, which was to make them masters and the Christians slaves. But the plots were always discovered, and the ringleaders tortured and put to death, as an example to the rest. At one time owners had great difficulty in preventing their slaves from hanging themselves, either out of fear of possible punishment for some small fault, or dread of vengeance threatened by masters or overseers. Consequently no owner ever delayed a punish-

ment. The darkies all had a firm belief in a resurrection, and were convinced they would return after death to their own country and begin their lives anew. This conviction led them to endeavour to expedite their release from slavery. An owner who had lost several useful slaves in this manner, "caused one of their heads to be cut off and fixed on a pole 12 feet high, and obliged all his slaves to come forth and march round this head, to show the poor creatures that they were in error in thinking the dead returned to their own country, for this man's head was here, as they all plainly saw, and how was it possible the body could go without the head?" This simple theory was quite sufficient to convince them, and thenceforth that owner never lost another slave by suicide.

Sometimes there was a theatrical performance in one or other of the capitals of the various islands. Companies from England or France paid the principal cities a visit, and occasionally amateurs undertook to assist the professionals, or to supplement their efforts. The French theatre at St George's, Grenada, had a great reputation throughout the islands. It was opened about six times in the year, sometimes by an English and sometimes by a French troupe. We read in the *Grenada Gazette* that "on Saturday, 31st August 1792, 'Douglas' was performed, Lady Randolph by a lady—her first appearance on any stage—and old Norval by a gentleman." "No admittance," the announcement goes on to say, "on any account behind the scenes. The gentility is invited to send their negroes early (to retain seats), who are to sit in their places till five minutes

before the curtain rises, when they are to give up their places to the proper owners." The managers also remind the audience to "bring their own candles." The negroes filled the galleries, and were renowned for their judicious criticism, the warmth of their applause, and the vehemence of their disapproval. Ladies of great quality were accommodated with seats on the stage. We note that on one occasion, in 1798, the French company gives "Nina Folle par Amour." This must be either Copolla's or Paesiello's opera, composed about that time.

Cock-fighting, we learn from the same journal, was a fashionable sport of the gentry. "On Saturday, the 31st September 1792, at 10 o'clock, a match of twenty cocks will be fought by ten gentlemen. *N.B.*—A genteel dinner will be provided." In the same day's issue is announced the appearance in England of "a new sect, called the Anti-Chartists," whom it describes as "another branch of those iniquitous wretches who are opposed to the slave-trade."

Jamaica, then said to be the "wickedest place on earth," is mentioned with great detail in *The British Empire in America, or the History of the Discovery, etc., of the British Colonies* (published in London, *1708*). The island probably deserved its name, for, in point of fact, the inhabitants mainly gained their livelihood at that period by trading with pirates, an enormous number of whom infested the neighbouring seas, making raids upon the Spanish islands, and carrying off immense treasure to Jamaica, where it was spent in debauchery.

The same book gives some interesting details of the earthquake in Jamaica on 7th June 1692. In many of the streets of Port Royal there were several fathoms of water, "a great mountain split and fell into the level land, and covered several settlements and destroyed many people." One settler's plantation was carried half a mile from the place where it formerly stood. Part of the mountain, after having made several leaps, overwhelmed a whole family and great part of a plantation, lying a mile off; "and a large mountain is quite swallowed up, and in the place where it stood there is now a vast lake, four or five leagues over." About 2000 people perished by this catastrophe.

Owners would never consent to allow their slaves to become Christians, as will be seen by the following extract:—

"I took a great interest in a certain slave, Sambo, who wanted much to become a Christian, and spoke to the master of the plantation on his behalf. His answer was, that were Sambo once a Christian he could no longer be accounted a slave, and thus owners would lose hold on their slaves. Were he in this case to do so, such a gap would be opened that all the planters in the isle would curse him."

We learn from another old volume (*An Account of the Island of Domingo, 1668*) that "there are several old mountains in the midst, which encompass an inaccessible bottom, where from the top of certain rocks may be seen an infinite variety of reptiles of dreadful bulk and length. The natives were wont to tell of a vast monstrous serpent that had its abode in the said

bottom. They affirmed that there was in the head of it a very sparkling stone, like a carbuncle, of inestimable price, that the monster commonly veiled that rich jewel with a thin moving skin like that of a man's eyelid, and when it went to drink, and sported itself in the deep bottom it fully discovered it, and the rocks all about received a wonderful lustre from the fire issuing out of that precious gem."

The original entry of the marriage of Lord Nelson in the register of the parish church where it took place was exhibited in the Nevis Court. Very singular also is the sales-list of the Byam estate in Antigua, from which we learn the prices of slaves to have varied from £10 to £150, "warranted sound." Some elderly ladies and gentlemen of colour are occasionally "thrown in gratis." Several copies of the slave Bible were also shown, in which all verses calculated to disturb the idea that slavery is an institution by right Divine are carefully eliminated.

THE END.

INDEX.

A.

ADDERLEY, Sir Augustus, 257.
Advertisements for the sale of slaves, 271.
Albemarle, Duke of, captures Havana and Matanzas, 60.
,, Duke of, Governor of Jamaica, 268.
,, Duchess of, 269; remarkable behaviour of, 270; believes herself to be Empress of China, 270.
Amedeo, Prince, accepts the Spanish crown and resigns it again, 90.
American Revolution, the, 62.
Americans, influence of the, upon Cuba, 19; settlements in the island, 26; help the insurgents, 87.
Amusements in Havana, 129; during Carnival, 139.
Animals found by Columbus in Cuba, 6; animals of the forests, 106.
Antomarchi, Dr to Napoleon I., 203; his death and monument, 203.
Apiculture introduced by French colonists, 61.
Aquelera, Don Francisco, elected President of the Cuban Republic, 93.
Aristocracy, Havanese, 126.
Aristolochia pelicana, the, 149.
Army, the rebel, its number and organization, 101.
Autos da fé, the frequency of, 56; description of an, 59.

B.

BAHAMAS first sighted by Christopher Columbus, 38; New Providence, 224.
Bananas, 4; used as vegetables, 154.
Banyan tree, the, 148.
Baracoa founded by Diego Velasquez, 49.
Barbadoes, 263; governorship of Lord Howe, 266.
Bats, enormous size of, 7.
Bayamo, founded by Diego Velasquez, 49; taken by the Spaniards from the rebels, 85.
Beggars in Havana, the, 137.
Bellamar Caves, the, 158.
Berriz, Colonel, accusations brought against, by Miss Cisneros, 118.
Birds, 8.
Blake, Lady, 231.
Bobadilla, Doña Isabella de, Governess of Cuba, 181.
Bolivar, 67.
Borgian Maps, the, 258.
Botanical Gardens of Havana, the, 127.
British interests in Cuba, 26.
Buccaneers, the, and their romantic history, 51; their hatred of the Spaniards, 52; their rugged life, 52; Henry Morgan, the Welshman, 52; they burn Havana, 53; enactments against the, 52; the adventures of Jacob Sores, 53.
Buchanan, President, threatening message to Spain, 78.
Bull-baiting, 145.
Butter, lack of, in Cuba, 154.

C.

CACTUS, the enormous size of the, 126.
Cafés and restaurants, Cuban, 155.
Campos, Marshal Martinez, agrees to the Treaty of Zanjou, 94; his good intentions, 116.
Canga, the, 141.

Canovas, Señor, de Castillo, signs Treaty of Zanjou, 95.
Cardenas, called the "American City," 26; its population, 192 (in note).
Carnival, dances given during, 23; the Havanese Carnival, 139; its end on Shrove Tuesday, 142.
Caruba tree, the, 190.
Cattle used as horses, 167 (in note).
Cauto River, the, navigable for small craft, 5.
Caves of the Bellamar, the magnificent, 158.
Cays, the, dangerous to vessels, 5; their beauty, 174.
Cemeteries, Cuban, 202.
Cereals, exported from Spain, 4.
Cerro, the, 125.
Cespedes, Carlos Manuel, begins the rebellion, 83; his character, 83; the burning of his plantation, 85; elected President of the Cuban Republic, 87; his tragic death, 91.
Chinese, the wretched condition of the, in Cuba, 37; the Chinese in the ranks of the rebels, 37; their religious practices, 110.
Churches, the, of Havana, 132; music in the, 138; flirtation in church, 138.
Cienfuegos, the town and harbour, 161; the surrounding country, 162.
Cipango, Columbus thinks Cuba is, 42.
Cisneros, Miss Evangelina, story of, 117.
Cisneros y Bétancourt, Don Salvador, elected President of the Cuban Republic, 93.
Clergy, the, of the rebel army, 109.
Cleveland, President, tries to prevent filibustering expeditions to Cuba, 99.
Climate, 2 (in note); is tolerable, 10; 108.
Coaches in Havana, 131.
Cock-fighting in Cuba, 145; a century ago, 275.
Cocoa, 4; the plant, 213.
Coffee, was one of the principal products, 3; replaced by the sugar cane, 69; a coffee plantation, 213.
Columbus, Christopher, first sights the New World, 38; lands at Fernandina, 39; the wonders he encounters, 39; his followers grow clamorous for gold, 40; the imaginery Quinsai, 40; he discovers Cuba, 40; and takes possession of it in the names of the Spanish sovereigns, 41; convinced that it is the Cipango described by Marco Polo, 42; believes Cuba to be a part of the mainland, 43; said to have landed at British Honduras, 44; Columbus and the native, 46; visits the island twice again, 49; the journeyings of his remains, 133; his enthusiastic description of New Providence, 225; his birthplace, 237; and parents, 238; the house in which he was born, 240; his brothers, 241; first goes to sea, 244; his education, 244; the sports he played when a child, 254.
Columbus, Diego, Governor of Hispaniola, 49.
Cook, the Cuban, 124.
Cookery, Cuban, 155.
Coolie labour, 36.
Cuba, Island of, its shape and size, 1; mountains, 2; position and weather, 2 (in note); coffee and tobacco once the chief articles of cultivation, 3; French settlers persuade the Cubans to extend their sugar plantations, 4; other products, 4; navigable rivers, 5; animals and reptiles, 7; disagreeable insects, 8; flora, 10; climate, 10; filthy drains, 11; its prehistoric inhabitants, 14; present population and inhabitants, 16; laws, 17; first appearance of the Inquisition on the island, 18; Las Casas gives an impetus to education, 18; state of chaos in, during the Napoleonic period, 19; overrun by Americans, 19; society in, 23; first sighted by Columbus, 40; its numerous names, 41 (in note); its beauties in the eyes of its Discoverer, 41; first circumnavigated, 49; Diego Velasquez sent to, 49; he founds Havana, Santiago de Cuba, etc., 49; Hernando Cortez in, 49; C. during the buccaneering period, 51; Drake appears off, 54; prosperity of, at the beginning of the 18th century, 59; taken by the English under the Duke of Albemarle in 1762, 60; large French emigration to, 61; administration of Don Luis Las Casas, 63; effect of the Revolution upon, 66; bad times for, 68; opening of the Cuban ports, 68; "Cuba la Sempre Fiel," 69; the beneficent

government of Tacon, 72; the prosperity of, declining, 73; the first indications of rebellion, 74; offers to purchase C., 77; C. in 1860, 79; the state of the island going from bad to worse, 81; result of the work of the Commission appointed to enquire into the affairs of, 81; Maximo Gomez, Commander-in-Chief of the rebel army, 93; U.S. trade with Cuba, 97, 113; Cuban forests, 104; economic condition of, 114; C. Spain's death-trap, 115; description of Havana, 121; Marianao, 148; the cafés and restaurants of Cuba, 155; Cienfuegos, 161; Trinidad, 172; backward state of the plantations, 174; Santiago de Cuba, 179; the newspapers of, 189; a Cuban plantation, 205; the beauty of the Cuban night, 212; a Cuban household, 214.
Cubana, the dance, 141.
Cubanos, or Cubans, filthy habits of the, 11; descent from early Spanish settlers, 17; characteristics of the, 18; Voltarian and free-thinking works read by the, during the Napoleonic Era, 19; many, educated, 19; the C. not permitted to share in the Government until twenty years ago, 20; C. who live for generations on one plantation, 20; a very domestic people, 21; isolation of the children, 21; premature marriages, 21; laxity of morals among the, 21; morbid literature read by the, 21; the drama, 22; their love of music, 22; the women, 22; Cuban society, 23; their large families, 24; the piety of the women, 24; insincerity of the, in their religion, 24; their contract with foreign ideas, 71; their wish to be represented in the Cortes at Madrid, 74; they petition Queen Isabella to appoint a Commission to enquire into the state of the island, 81; C. in official positions, 112; the Carnival in Havana, 139; their theatricals, 144; the Guajiros, 162; early habits of the C., 168; why they differ with the Spaniards, 176; a Cuban funeral, 200; a young Cuban lady, 215; their partiality for smoking, 222.
Cucullo, the, 8.

D.

Decker, Mr, and the Miss Cisneros incident, 118.
Dinner, a Cuban, 154.
Dogs, 6; the tiny spaniel and the colossal molasso, 6.
Drains, abominable condition of the, 11.
Drake, Sir Francis, appears off Cuba, 54.
Duck-hunt, a, 170.
"Dutchman's pipe," the, 150.
Dysentery among European colonists, 10.

E.

Earthquakes, 3.
Eastern Province, the wholesomest part of the island, 11.
Education, impetus given to, by Las Casas, 18; the education given by the Jesuits, 19.
Emancipation of the slaves, first steps towards the, 29; its horrible results, 29.
Estates, the large, given to Spaniards, 20; rarely if ever visited by the latter, 20; curious custom on many Cuban estates, 20.

F

Fan, the language of the, 138.
Ferdinand the Catholic, his opinion of the Spanish people, 70.
Fernandina, 39.
Filharmonia Theatre, an incident in the, 76; the first appearance of Mme. Patti at the, 143.
Fish, 6; tropical, 8.
Flora, beauty and variety of the, 10; in the forests, 105; some strange flowers, 128; the banyan tree, etc., 148; ferns, 151, 184; the moon-flower, 213; the silk-cotton-tree, 229; the vegetation of New Providence, Bahamas, 231.
Florida, failure of Hernando de Soto's expedition to, 50; given to the English in exchange for Cuba, 60.
Foreign residents, 20.
Forests, Cuban, 4, 104.
Fossils of prehistoric fauna, 6; of human remains, 14.
France wishes to purchase Cuba, 77.
French Revolution, effects of the, upon

the West Indies, 64; remarks upon the, 271.
French settlers, persuade the Cubans to enlarge their sugar plantations, 4; large emigration of, in 1765, 61; they introduce the art of apiculture, 61.
Fruits of Cuba, 4; oranges, bananas, etc., 154.
Funeral rites, 200.

G.

Galegos, immigration into Cuba of, 17 (in note).
Galleria, the, 145.
Gambling in Cuba, 144.
Game, prehistoric, 6.
Garcia, Manuel, the brigand, 101.
Genoa, the birthplace of Columbus, 238; description and appearance of, 247; the trade of, 255.
Genoese, the, 252; the piety of the, 253.
Ghosts, Cuban belief in, 198.
Gomez, Maximo, Commander-in-Chief of the rebel forces, 93; he retires to San Domingo, 95.
Government of Cuba, 74 (in note); the bad, 77; its backwardness, 115.
Governors, magnificence of the, 54; their rapacity, 74.
Grant's Town, 228.
"Green snake," the, 232.
Grenada Gazette, 266, 271.
Guajiros, manners and customs of the, 162; their supposed relationship with our own costers, 165.
Guanajay, 219.
Guava jelly, 217.

H.

Haskett, Mr Elias, Governor of the Bahamas, 267.
Hatuei, the Cacique, bravery of, 15 (in note).
Havana, the city of, society in, 23; founded by Diego Velasquez in 1519, 49; obtains civic rights under Las Casas, 50; burnt by the buccaneers in 1528, 53; rebuilt by Hernando de Soto, 53; sacked afresh by the buccaneers, 54; attacked by the Dutch under Admiral Jollo, who is repulsed, 54; first theatre opened in, 56; attacked and taken by the English under the Duke of Albemarle, 1762, 60; Tacon rebuilds part of the town, 72; Diego Velasquez calls Havana "La llave del Nuevo Mondo," 121 (in note); view of the town from the harbour, 121; the houses of, 123; the Cerro, 125; aristocracy of, 126; cathedral, churches, promenades, gardens, streets, etc., 126; mode of shopping in, 127; the Botanical Gardens, 127; eventide in, 129; coaches, 131; the churches, 132; charitable institutions, 137; the beggars of, 137; the Carnival, 139.
Havana University established in 1721, 18; several chairs created by Las Casas, 19; almost entirely governed by Cubans, 112.
Heredia, José Maria, Cuba's greatest poet, 184.
Holy Week in Santiago, 181.
Horses, scarcity of, in Cuba, 55.
Hotels in Matanzas, the, 152.
Houses of Havana, the, 123; of Matanzas, 157.
Howe, Lord, Governor of Barbadoes, 266.
Hurricanes, 2 (in note).

I.

Iguana, the harmless but hideous, 9; roast, 217.
Indian and Colonial Exhibition, 257.
Indigo, 4.
Inhabitants, earliest, 14.
Inquisition, or Holy Office, first introduced into Cuba, 18; used against State prisoners, 58.
Insects, disagreeable, 8; several insects first introduced into Europe from Cuba, 8; the cucullo, 8; mosquitoes, 126.
Institutions, charitable, 137.

J.

Jamaica, 275; an earthquake, 276.
Jesuits, the education given by the, 19; persecution of the, 34; their first appearance in Cuba, 57.
Jewellery, quantity of, in Havana, 125.
Jews, the, in Cuba, 27.
Junta, Gran, in New York, 98; excites the Americans against Weyler's atrocities, 117.

L.

LANGUAGE of the early natives, 15.
Las Casas, aid given to education by, 18; his good government, 50.
Las Casas, Don Luis, the good administration of, 63.
Leyes de Indias, Las, 18, 31.
Litterateurs of Cuba, 184.
Lizards, variety of, 9.
Louisiana, expedition to, under O'Reilly, 61.
Lowther, Mr, Governor of Barbadoes, 267.

M.

MACEO, cruelty of, 101; his character and appearance, 110; doubts as to whether he is shot, 111.
Mahogany, a once valuable product, 4.
"Maine" disaster, the, 120.
Maize, always been a necessity of life, 4.
Mangoes, 4.
Mantis, 207.
Marco Polo, 38.
Marianao, 148.
Matanzas taken by the English in 1762, 60; its foundation and name, 152; "The Golden Lion," 152; description of M., 157; its attractions, 158; the Yumurri Valley, 159.
Mayas, importation into Cuba of, to take the place of coolie labour, 37.
Merced, 132; the curious picture in the, 135; its orchestra, 138.
Mexico, the Revolution in, 68.
Milanes, the poet, 186.
Monserrat, condition of the island of, in the 17th century, 260.
Moon-flower, the, 213.
Morgan, Henry, the Welsh buccaneer, 52.
Morro Castle, 121.
Mosquitos, swarms of, 126.
Mountains of Cuba, 2; unhealthy condition of the mountain regions, 4.
Music, Cuban, 190.

N.

NASSAU, the city of, 226; Grant's Town, 228; the silk-cotton-tree, 229; its magnificent bay, 233.
Natives, language of the, at the time of Columbus, 15; their appearance and manners of life, 15; extermination of the, 15 (in note); modesty of the native ladies, 39; condition of the, at the time of the discovery, 44; their affinity with the natives of the neighbouring islands and the mainland, 44; their number, 45; their quiet life, 45; and religion, 46; Spanish cruelty to the, 47; their few descendants, 48; reduced to slavery, 49.
Navaez starts from Santiago for Yucatan, 180.
Negroes introduced to replace the aborigines, 27; the free blacks, 35; their liking for gaudy dresses, 35; in church, 35; their love of music, 36; rebellion of the, 64; barbaric state of the rebel negroes, 109; how the blacks enjoy themselves during the Carnival in Havana, 140; piety of the, 142; the n. at the opera, 142; their superstitions, 193; the n. of the Bahamas, 224; their cleanly habits, 226; the n. of Monserrat, 261.
Nelson, marriage of Lord, 277.
New Providence, Bahamas, 225; a contrast after Cuba, 226; its vegetation, 231; the flatness of the island, 233; the heavy dews, 236.
Newspapers, the, of Cuba, 189.

O.

OBI, the worship of, 193; strange rites of, 194.
Ojo del Toro, Mountain of, 2.
Oranges, 4.
O'Reilly, Marshal, his expedition to Louisiana, 62.

P.

PALMA, SEÑOR THOMASO ESTRADO, President of the Gran Junta in New York, 98.
Palm-trees, 205.
Patria, La, the Revolutionary journal, 98.
Payrete Theatre, the, 141.
Petition to the Queen-Regent of Spain, 119.
Philip II., laws framed by, 18; fortifies Cuba, 54.
Philippe, Louis, wishes to buy Cuba, 77.
Pico Turquino, Mountain, 3.
Pine-apple, the, 4; a plantation, 233.

Pinos, La Isla dos, a health resort, 5 and 11.
Plantations, or Hecendas, backward state of the, 174; description of a, 205.
Population, sparse, in mountain regions, 4; early inhabitants, 14; present, 16; the rural, 176.
Prim, General, proposes to sell Cuba to the U.S., 88; assassination of, 90.
Procession, a religious, 169.
Propaganda, the archives of the, 258.
Puentas Grandes, 149.
Puerto Principe, founded by Diego Velasquez, 49; description of, 192.
Punta, La, the fortress, 121.

Q.

QUESADA, MANUEL DE, brother-in-law to Cespedes, elected Commander-in-Chief of the insurgent army, 87.
Quinsai, the imaginery city, 40.

R.

RAILWAYS, mainly in British hands, 26; Cuban, 150.
Rainy season, 2 (in note).
Rebellion, the Cuban, real commencement of the movement, 64; first steps towards open, 75; open revolt under Cespedes, 82; the holder of the funds decamps, 84; want of money and arms, 84; rebels worsted at Bayamo, 85; the horrors which resulted, 85; tragic death of Cespedes, 91; Maximo Gomez elected Commander-in-Chief, 93; the Treaty of Zanjou, 94; abstention of the towns from taking part in the, 100; organization of the, 101; an encampment, 107.
Rebels, cruelty of the, 101; number and organization of the, 101; amusements of the, 109; their priests, 109.
Reconcentrados, the miserable lot of the, 108.
Religion, insincerity of the Cubans in their, 24; present religious awakening, 24; toleration, 26; religion and slavery, 34; Catholicism in Cuba, 56; ceremonies of the Church, 57; an Archbishopric created, 58; reaction in favour of, 138; a procession, 169; state of, in Monserrat, 260.
Reptiles: the red asp, 7; scorpions, 7; cure for the bite of a Cuban scorpion, 7.
Republic, the Cuban, proclaimed by, and Cespedes elected President, 87; send envoys to England, France, and the United States, 87; tragic death of Cespedes, 91; Don Cisneros-y Bétancourt elected President, 93; Don Francisco Aquelera, third President, 93; the Treaty of Zanjou, 94; the Republican Parliament dissolved in 1879, 95.
Rincon, 151.
Rosario waterfalls, 6.

S.

SAN DOMINGO, revolt of the negroes in, 63.
San Francisco, the church of, 136.
San Salvador, first sighted by Columbus, 38.
Santiago, the province of, earthquakes in, 3; healthiest half of the island, 11.
Santiago de Cuba, founded by Diego Velasquez in 1516, 49; its bay, 178; most historical city in the island, 180; the cathedral, 181; Holy Week in, 181; a literary centre, 184.
Santoveneo, the late Countess of, 125.
Secret societies formed, 67; branches in America, 98.
Shea, Sir Ambrose, Governor of the Bahamas, 232.
Shopping in Havana, mode of, 127.
Sierra de Cobre, 3.
Sierra Maestra, 1; resemblance to Genoese Riviera, 2; its peaks, 2.
Silk-cotton-tree, the, 229.
Slaves, female, 28; the trade, 29; the first steps towards their emancipation, and its horrible consequences, 29; continued sale of, notwithstanding the law, 30; their idea of freedom, 30; laws to protect the, 31; inhuman torture of, 32; the household slaves, 33; their long hours of labour, 34; slavery and religion, 34; slavery replaced by coolie labour, 37; large importation of, 73; an arrangement for freeing them, 82; laws against them, 261; advertisements for the sale of, 271; good treatment of the, 270.
Society, Cuban, 23.
Sores, Jacob, the adventures of, 53.
Soto, Hernando de, his ill-fated expedition to Florida, 50; he rebuilds Havana, 53.

Spain aids the American revolutionists, 62; mistaken policy of, with regard to Cuba, 66; her revolting colonies, 67; revolution in S., 90; malad-ministration of, in Cuba, 112.
Spaniards in the island, 17; bigotry of, 18; S. and Cubans compared, 18; their way of living, 25; their cruelty, 47; hatred in which they were held in the West Indies, 51; dissipation of the Spanish landowners, 175.
Springs, fresh, 6.
Stories of the Obi, strange, 194.
Sucking-pig, the universal love of, 217.
Sugar, French colonists persuade greater growth of, 4; sugar canes take the place of coffee, 69; depreciation in value of, 114; backward state of the plantations, 174; description of a s. plantation, 208; how sugar is made, 211.
Superstitions, Cuban, 193.

T.

TACON, the good administration of, 72.
Tacon, Theatre, the orchestra of the, 36; the Carnival ball at the, 140; description of the, 142; great singers at the, 143.
Theatres in the West Indies, 274.
Tobacco, one of the chief products, 3; some of the best plantations in British hands, 26; the trade in a bad state, 114; the story of, 218; Cuban, 219; the tobacco industry, 221.
Tom-tom, the, 36.
Torrecillas Theatre, the, 144.
Tortoise-hunting, 8.
Tortuga, Island of, the headquarters of the buccaneers, 52.
Torture of slaves, inhuman, 32.
Trinidad de Cuba, founded by Diego Velasquez in 1513, 171; the starting place of Cortez on his expedition to Mexico, 171.
Turquino, the highest point in Cuba, 178.
Twilight, no, in Cuban latitudes, 174.

U.

UNITED STATES, the, wish to annex Cuba by purchase, 78; will not recognise the Cuban Republic, 88; another proposal for the purchase of the island, 88; indignation in, over the "Virginius" affair, 89; importance of Cuba to the, 95; her trade with Cuba, 97, 113.
University of Havana established in 1721, 18; several chairs created by Las Casas, 19; almost entirely governed by Cubans, 112.

V.

VALDES, GABRIEL DE LA CONCEPCION, the mulatto poet, and his works, 186.
Varona, Don Enrique Jose, editor of *La Patria*, 98.
Vegetation of Cuba, 104.
Velasquez, Diego, sent to Cuba, 49; founds Havana, Santiago, and other towns, 49; impressed by the harbour of Havana, 121 (in note).
Villa Clara, 192.
"Virginius," affair of the, 89.
Volante, first appearance of the, 55; how it looked, 131.
Vomito nigro, the deadly, 10; whites attacked by, 104.

W.

WATERFALLS, the Rosario, 6.
West Indies, general condition of the, during the 17th century, 260; different Governors of the, 266.
Weyler, General, Marquis of Tenerife, administration of, 116.

Y.

YAMS, 4.
Yellow fever, said to have first appeared in 1761: the quickness with which its victims succumb, 12; statistics of, 103 (in note).
Yumurri Valley, the, 159.

Z.

ZAMBRANA, RAMON, the poet, 188.
Zanjou, Treaty of, 94.

PRINTED BY NEILL AND COMPANY, EDINBURGH.

114506

114506

F
1763
D24

Davey, Richard P.
Cuba past and
present.

114506

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER
F1763.D24
Cuba past and present,
0 00 01 0097803 0